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# General Assembly

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*Official Records*

First Committee

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New York

*Chairperson*: Mrs. Juul ..... (Norway)

*The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.*

**Agenda items 82 to 97 (*continued*)**

**General debate on all disarmament and international security agenda items**

**The Chairperson**: I should like first to make a statement in my personal capacity as Chairperson of the Committee.

It appears that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has conducted a nuclear-test explosion. Let there be no doubt about my views on this. The test explosion is deplorable, irresponsible and totally unacceptable. It threatens regional as well as global peace and security. I trust that the Security Council will take appropriate action, and I call on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to return to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) as a non-nuclear-weapon State.

As there is a long list of speakers for this meeting, I would once again strongly request delegations strictly to abide by the agreed time limit for their statements, so that we can conclude our general debate this morning and start the second phase of our work this afternoon, as planned.

**Mr. Dilja** (Albania): Madam Chairperson, allow me to congratulate you on your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee. We are fully confident that, under your leadership, we will further the work of the Committee. The Albanian delegation offers you and the Bureau its full support.

Albania aligns itself with the statement of the European Union delivered in the Committee by the representative of Finland at the beginning of the general debate. In its statement, my delegation would like to make further brief remarks.

The serious discussions and negotiations that take place during the Committee's deliberations reflect the significance of its agenda as well as the need for a broader international consensus on disarmament issues: terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the direct means of their delivery, the proliferation of small arms and light weapons and so on continue to represent dangerous threats to international peace, security and stability. Maintaining peace and security in the face of these new threats and challenges is a complex and multidimensional task. We should place greater emphasis on preventing threats and conflicts before they develop.

Combating terrorism is a top priority, as it represents one of the major threats to international peace and security. While welcoming the new Global Counter-terrorism Strategy, adopted by consensus here at the United Nations, we emphasize the importance of concerted efforts in agreeing and finalizing a comprehensive convention on international terrorism.

The Albanian Government reiterates its condemnation of any form or manifestation of terrorism. It remains committed to making its contribution and fulfilling its obligations as an active member of the international coalition against terrorism.

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Albania has signed, ratified and is implementing on an ongoing basis the 12 United Nations conventions and protocols against terrorism. We have extended the implementation of the various relevant Security Council resolutions, cooperating closely with its respective structures and duly submitting the required regular reports.

Albania supports an effective strategy designed to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery as well as their falling into the hands of terrorists or non-State actors. Real progress in those very important areas is possible if all Member States fulfil their obligations regarding nuclear disarmament and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

Albania attaches particular importance to Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), recognizing it as an entirely appropriate measure to counter the threat. We have taken various appropriate legislative actions in order to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. We remain committed, as required, to maintaining and developing appropriate and effective measures as well as adopting and enforcing additional appropriate and effective laws in that respect.

Albania takes this opportunity to renew its full commitment to the disarmament treaties and instruments to which it is a party.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is a crucial multilateral instrument of the non-proliferation regime and remains the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament process. This regime must be strengthened and improved.

As a non-nuclear-weapon State, the Republic of Albania remains faithful to the spirit of the NPT and reiterates its full political will to strengthen its commitment to non-proliferation. We also express our support for the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and for the strengthening of the role of the Security Council in reacting to any challenges or threats posed to international peace and security by the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

Albania expresses the deepest concern regarding the most recent developments in North Korea. We oppose and condemn the nuclear test it carried out yesterday. That test is, as you mentioned, Madam, deplorable. We share the international community's reaction that the necessary pressure must be brought to bear on North Korea against such conduct.

As concerns Iran, we believe that responding positively to the demands formulated by the IAEA and complying with Security Council resolution 1696 (2006) is the most positive and constructive approach. We support all of the multilateral diplomatic efforts that have been made in this respect.

We believe that parallel efforts should be made to strengthen the disarmament and non-proliferation regimes. Threats from biological and chemical weapons remain a concern. Further strengthening the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention and the Chemical Weapons Convention is essential to counter such threats. Albania supports the strict application of the Chemical Weapons Convention. To that end, we have undertaken national efforts and concrete implementation measures. Chemical weapons stockpiles are subject to destruction. We have just begun implementation of the national programme on the destruction of chemical weapons, with the intention of, and a commitment to, destroying all stockpiles of such weapons before the deadline set in the Convention — that is, by 2007.

Albania aligns itself with the joint ministerial statement made in support of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and its entry into force on the tenth anniversary of the Treaty's opening for signature, as we consider it an important instrument in the field of non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament.

In conclusion, I should like to touch briefly on the issue of small arms and light weapons. As the Secretary-General underlines in his latest report on the work of the Organization, the proliferation of small arms and light weapons continues to pose a serious threat to peace, security, stability and to the well-being of peoples in many regions of the world. We share the view that further concrete action is needed on small arms and light weapons at the national, regional and global levels. Such weapons may be small, but they cause massive destruction.

In that context, Albania deems the issue of the control of small arms and light weapons to be directly related to national, regional and international security. Albania remains committed to the United Nations Programme of Action as the framework for both legal

and practical measures against the illicit trade in such weapons. The Albanian Government remains determined to further increase national capacity in the field of control over small arms and light weapons through various simultaneous and integrated measures on transfer, stockpile management and destruction. The amount of resources invested in this effort and the work already done reflect our determination to continue to make a valuable contribution with regard to small arms and light weapons.

We will continue to support all goals, initiatives and obligations related to such arms and to pay the utmost attention to the fulfilment of our obligations deriving from international instruments.

A regional perspective and cooperation on this matter is of paramount importance and of common interest. South-Eastern Europe has recently proved the benefits of such cooperation. Regional initiatives on combating the illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons, as well as initiatives at the national level for their collection, destruction and non-proliferation have been concrete and rewarding in the region, including in Kosovo. They have been supported and assisted by various international organizations such as the European Union, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), and so on. We believe that this spirit of cooperation should continue in our region, which experienced firsthand the dangers posed by these weapons during the wars of the 1990s.

In line with the need to control the undesirable proliferation of conventional arms, Albania favours an international, legally binding treaty on the trade in all conventional weapons. We think that this is a positive development and concur with the proposal to start a United Nations-based process to take forward action in that area.

**The Chairperson**: I see that we have been joined this morning by our junior colleagues from the Disarmament Fellowship Programme. On behalf of the Committee, I would like to extend a warm welcome to them. It is my sincere hope that this next generation of disarmament experts will be able to gain invaluable experience by closely observing the work of our Committee during this session.

**Mr. Moungara Moussotsi** (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): Madam Chairperson, like the delegations that spoke before me, which eloquently expressed the high esteem in which they hold you and the other members of the Bureau, I, too, should like to congratulate you on your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee and to assure you of the full cooperation of the delegation of Gabon. My delegation believes that your election is of symbolic importance, first, because you are the first woman to chair the Committee, and, secondly, because all are aware of the important contribution of your country to peace in the world.

I should like also to align myself with the statements made by the representative of Nigeria on behalf of Africa and by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

When the General Assembly adopted its very first resolution, in 1946, whereby it established a commission to deal with the problem raised by the discovery of atomic energy, it was aware of the very real dangers posed by atomic weapons. In subparagraph 4 (c) of that resolution, the General Assembly committed itself to eliminate atomic weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

However, 50 years later, weapons of mass destruction, and nuclear weapons in particular, continue to pose serious threats to international peace and security. Not only do strategic defence doctrines based on the use of these types of weapons continue to exist, but new, updated weapons continue to be produced.

The increase in military expenditures brings to mind recalls the period following the Second World War, while at the same time official development assistance continues to decrease. The resources sunk into armaments far exceed those allocated to social services.

Thus it is only appropriate that the statements made throughout the general debate of our Committee have deplored the lack of progress made in the process of disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. In fact, the negotiations held to date, both within multilateral disarmament mechanisms and within the bilateral framework of the nuclear Powers, have not, unfortunately, led to the hoped-for results. Even worse, in recent years there has been a reversal in efforts to rid the world of the nuclear threat. The failure of the 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) was a real setback for the disarmament process.

With regard to conventional weapons, in particular small arms and light weapons, the failure in July 2006 of the Conference to Review the Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects was a regrettable setback. Indeed, only the year before, the adoption of an International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons, as well as consultations on the negotiation of a legal instrument on brokering, had raised hopes of an expanded, more coordinated struggle against the scourge of the illicit and destabilizing movement of small arms and light weapons.

Our collective security, which also requires the achievement of general and complete disarmament, cannot be ensured by the status quo. As my Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Jean Ping, said on 25 September before the General Assembly,

> "we have the moral duty and common responsibility to renew disarmament negotiations, particularly in the nuclear sphere". (*see A/61/PV.18*)

Such negotiations must take place within the multilateral mechanisms created to that end, namely within the Disarmament Commission and the Conference on Disarmament.

Gabon has signed and ratified most of the international instruments in the area of disarmament, including the NPT, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and the Ottawa Convention against the production and use of anti-personnel mines. In addition, it has on its territory an auxiliary seismic monitoring station as part of the CTBT's International Monitoring System. That represents its modest contribution to the achievement of the universality of multilateral legal instruments on disarmament.

We therefore invite those States Members of the United Nations that have not yet done so to become parties to those disarmament and non-proliferation instruments in the interests of peace and security. Accession to all those treaties, as well as their strict implementation in good faith, would greatly contribute to advancing the process of disarmament and non-proliferation.

The challenges posed by terrorist threats means that there can be no letup in our efforts and no procrastination, as has been the case in the area of disarmament to date. Thus Gabon welcomed the adoption by the Security Council of resolution 1540 (2004) on non-proliferation and the adoption by the General Assembly of the Convention Against Nuclear Terrorism.

But we must make further progress. We need, inter alia, to begin consultations aimed at starting negotiations leading to the adoption of a binding instrument banning the production of fissile material. Strengthening control on nuclear waste, including that resulting from the peaceful use of atomic energy, is, we think, an important step that would minimize the likelihood of small terrorist groups' manufacturing "dirty bombs" or, to use a more technical term, radiological devices. We should also ensure stricter control of the movement of dual-use chemicals.

In the area of light weapons, the failure of the Review Conference on the Programme of Action, which I mentioned earlier, should not serve as a pretext for disregarding the Programme or international instruments on the marking and tracing of small arms and light weapons. Our efforts should focus on ways to help the poorest member States to make use of those two instruments, which are vital in combating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.

My delegation believes that, to be effective, efforts towards non-proliferation must be accompanied by a genuine commitment on the part of all to disarmament, the promotion of dialogue in international relations, and the taking into account of the energy and security requirements of all Member States.

As the Secretary-General has said, we have a choice: either we devote ourselves seriously and in good faith to the resumption and the conclusion of the disarmament process, or we will have to bear the heavy responsibility of an apocalyptic nuclear disaster.

**Mr. Alemo** (Ethiopia): Madam Chairperson, allow me to join previous speakers in congratulating you on your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee. I should like also to express our sincere appreciation to your predecessor for his commendable chairmanship of the Committee at its sixtieth session.

My delegation wishes to associate itself with the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, which

succinctly reiterated the Movement's longstanding positions on disarmament and international security, as expressed at the fourteenth Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement, held in Havana from 14 to 16 September 2006, as well as with the statement made by the representative of Nigeria on behalf of the African Group, reflecting our common views on the issues involved.

As the maintenance of peace and security is among the founding principles and purposes of the United Nations — as enshrined in its Charter — the promotion of multilateral diplomacy in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation on a wider scale remains of crucial significance.

In the case of Ethiopia, the ongoing promotion of peace and stability both at home and within the subregion, coupled with the dedication of every available resource to the multifaceted economic and social endeavours under way at the national level, have not only placed Ethiopia firmly on the path of overall growth and development but have also made it a pillar of peace and partnership within the Horn of Africa and beyond.

Ethiopia, having successfully embarked upon the path of peace, democracy and development, and having made substantial progress along this promising path over the past 15 years, since the demise of the military regime that ruled the country, has found its paramount challenge to be the struggle against its principal enemy: poverty and poverty-related issues.

That is the reason why Ethiopia attaches paramount importance to the issue of disarmament and non-proliferation in all its aspects. In terms of practical measures, Ethiopia has already signed, ratified or acceded to a number of international and regional instruments aimed at the promotion of disarmament and non-proliferation, and it will continue to do so. More importantly, it has faithfully upheld their principles by way of strict adherence to its treaty obligations in the course of their implementation.

In that regard, allow me to elaborate on Ethiopia's firm position and commitment to do its utmost to play its part in the areas of disarmament and non-proliferation, particularly regarding the aspects that concern it most.

Ethiopia has been fully implementing the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, as well as the Nairobi Protocol on small arms and light weapons, in close collaboration with all parties concerned. To that end, the Federal Police Commission has been charged with serving as the national focal point for small arms and light weapons. Measures have also been taken to revise legislation concerning arms and ammunition so as to make it more robust and comprehensive, in the light of international considerations and the extent of the problem.

Preparations are under way to destroy various types of small arms and light weapons, seized and collected from all over the country through searches and surprise checks. Furthermore, a national plan of action aimed at enabling the country to successfully meet its obligations in the area of small arms and light weapons is currently being developed. A central registration unit for small arms and light weapons is in the process of being established at the federal level. Personnel training and other related activities are being undertaken. These are all critical national tasks for which the assistance of developed countries, as well as that of the relevant organs of the United Nations, remains crucial, especially in the area of institutional capacity-building.

Likewise, Ethiopia is devoting the utmost attention to the implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction. It should also be recalled that Ethiopia actively participated in the drafting of the Ottawa Convention; strongly supported resolution 58/33 of 2003; and has actively participated in all annual conferences, as well as Standing Committee meetings on anti-personnel landmines, since 2001.

As one of the 24 parties to the Ottawa Convention that are known to have a high number of mine victims and survivors, Ethiopia is undertaking concrete measures, on a sustainable basis, to assist in the rehabilitation of the latter through a national plan of action, for which greater and intensified international assistance is of critical importance and is being sought.

It needs to be re-emphasized that Ethiopia does not produce any kind of anti-personnel landmine, nor has it imported any since 1991, that is, after the downfall of the military dictatorship that ruled the country.

Ethiopia's National Parliament is actively processing the ratification of the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty. Ethiopia is also a State party to the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC); the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT); the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC); the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT); the Partial-Test-Ban Treaty (PTBT); the 1925 Geneva Protocol and others, most of which it has already ratified.

Furthermore, Ethiopia is moving ahead to subscribe to the Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation, in line with its principled position on the issue of disarmament and non-proliferation.

The issues of disarmament and non-proliferation must be addressed in the light of the clear threats that terrorism poses to today's world. Having had experience in the fight against terrorism, Ethiopia knows well the evils of that scourge and believes in tackling it within a strong and unified international and regional framework of collaboration. Thus, in addition to embracing and practically implementing the various international instruments in this area, Ethiopia is also a party to the African Union Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism. It has also forged strong alliances with various subregional, regional and international partners in the fight against terrorism and will continue to do so in future.

I would like to conclude by reaffirming Ethiopia's commitment to promoting the broad agenda of disarmament and non-proliferation, both regionally and internationally, to ensure the effective maintenance of world peace and security. We remain confident that the Committee will be able to make some tangible headway through productive deliberations in the course of the current session.

**Mr. Al-Maabri** (Yemen) (*spoke in Arabic*): I should like at the outset to express to you, Madam, on behalf of my delegation, our sincere congratulations on your election to the chairmanship of this important Committee. I am confident that your well-known experience and skills will enable us to achieve a fruitful outcome. I should like to reiterate my delegation's full readiness to cooperate with you with a view to achieving tangible progress in all issues on our agenda during this session.

Nor can I fail to extend my congratulations to the other members of the Bureau on their election. Our thanks go also to the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs for his important introductory statement and for the efforts he has been making to create momentum at the international level so as to put an end to the arms race and to promote the effectiveness of the disarmament machinery. It is our sincere hope that the Committee will achieve its lofty objectives. Indeed, this will be possible only if all delegations display flexibility and political will so as to overcome the sense of frustration that is casting a shadow over our work, due to the stalemate in the work of the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva.

My Government, while supporting all sincere efforts aimed at the elimination of all weapons of mass destruction, reiterates the right of all States to use nuclear technology for peaceful purposes under international safeguards and the supervision of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

The elimination of weapons of mass destruction, primarily nuclear weapons, continues to require urgent attention by the Committee in view of the clear link between that issue and the question of the promotion and maintenance of international peace and security — the very reason for the founding of the United Nations. It will indeed be possible to achieve that objective if this issue is addressed in a transparent manner and if the application of double standards is eschewed by the more influential countries in that field.

Consistent and balanced positions must be adopted concerning nuclear disarmament and arms control. In that regard, my Government has called for, and will continue to call for, making the Middle East a zone free from weapons of mass destruction. It is doing so in recognition of the importance of such a positive step in building confidence and in preventing an arms race among the States of the region. Such a race would only make the situation there more turbulent and dangerous, not only for the States of the region but also for the rest of the world, given the region's sensitive geographical location and the vital interests at stake for the world as a whole. That means that all parties to the talks must remain open to negotiations and to creating the necessary machinery for dialogue so as to arrive at appropriate solutions to the question of the Iranian nuclear issue.

The establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East deserves the support and the attention of the international community, given its

positive effects on international peace and stability. While expressing the hope that this objective can be achieved, my Government expresses its concern at the insecurity prevailing in the region as a result of Israel's remaining outside the nuclear non-proliferation regime. It is therefore incumbent on Israel to accede forthwith to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and to place all its nuclear facilities under a comprehensive supervision regime, in accordance with the safeguards agreement with the IAEA.

In the context of the negotiations on enhancing the effectiveness of the work of the First Committee, my Government reaffirms the importance of multilateralism in dealing with issues related to disarmament and the strengthening of the multilateral machinery for disarmament as well as clear confidence-building with a view to general and complete disarmament.

Finally, my delegation hopes that the Committee's deliberations and resolutions will contribute to the fulfilment of the aspirations of all peoples to peace, stability and security.

**Ms. Al-Khalifa** (Bahrain) (*spoke in Arabic*): I should like at the outset to convey to you, Madam, my delegation's congratulations on your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee of the General Assembly at its sixty-first session. We wish you and the members of the Bureau every success in guiding the Committee's work. We are certain that, thanks to your experience and your wisdom, you will steer the Committee's work with skill and effectiveness.

In today's world, armament is increasing, despite the appeals made for disarmament. That is due to the failure of the negotiations held at previous conferences in previous years. It has not been possible to conclude agreements or to reach the objectives set in the course of the negotiations, which poses a threat to international peace and security. We therefore urge all parties to intensify their efforts to engage in multilateral negotiations on the basis of a consensus so as to prevent the proliferation of weapons and ensure that the goal of disarmament is reached.

The problem of weapons of mass destruction is one of the concerns of the international community as a whole, especially in the region of the Middle East. There are threats inherent in, and directly pertaining to, the proliferation and use of such weapons. Therefore, the countries of the region have been urged to make the Middle East, including the Gulf area, a nuclear-weapon-free zone that is also free of other weapons of mass destruction. Steps should be taken to adopt effective machinery to ensure the attainment of that objective under strict international monitoring.

In that context, we ask the international community and the major Powers to bring pressure to bear on Israel to accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Indeed, resolution 3472 B (XXX), adopted by the General Assembly on 11 December 1975, at its thirtieth session, states that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones is one of the most effective ways to prevent the vertical and horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons. The Security Council, for its part, adopted resolution 487 (1981), which required Israel to place all of its nuclear installations under the safeguards regime of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and to refrain from attacking or threatening to attack the nuclear facilities of other States.

Those resolutions and others are designed to make the Middle East a zone free from nuclear weapons, to ensure non-proliferation and general and complete disarmament, and to strengthen regional and international peace and security.

The Kingdom of Bahrain, whose goal is to ensure international cooperation in order to rid the world of weapons of mass destruction, has acceded to and ratified many agreements, including the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). The Kingdom will continue its efforts to reduce the proliferation of nuclear weapons in the context of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), under which Governments, including mine, commit themselves to report to the Security Council regarding nuclear weapons.

We support the efforts being made by the international community to find a peaceful solution through direct negotiations to the Iranian nuclear issue so as to prevent any further tension in the Arab Gulf region, and we urge Iran to cooperate with the IAEA and the parties concerned in that regard. We believe, however, in the safeguarding of the right of States to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, under the supervision of the IAEA.

It goes without saying that the reform efforts of the General Assembly and of its main committees should focus first on the implementation of resolutions without jeopardizing the primary objective of the United Nations, that is, the maintenance of international peace and security in all parts of the world. We must ensure the implementation of General Assembly resolutions on disarmament and of agreements and conventions aimed at creating an international environment conducive to peace, security, tolerance, tranquillity and stability.

**Mr. Alasania** (Georgia): Madam Chairperson, at the outset, allow me to congratulate you on your election as well as the other members of the Bureau and to express my delegation's sincere confidence that, under your capable guidance and leadership, we will be able to achieve significant results in our work.

As we are discussing international security issues, I would like to use this opportunity to focus delegations' attention on the latest developments in my country, Georgia. Just recently, on 30 September 2006, the Russian Federation launched large-scale naval military exercises in the immediate vicinity of the territorial sea of Georgia that not only caused serious harm to the trade and economic interests of my country and endangered its marine environment, but also limited the regular operations and normal activities of the various governmental authorities of Georgia in the exercise of their sovereign rights.

Despite Georgia's objections and its request that such exercises cease immediately, unfortunately, just yesterday, these military naval manoeuvres were relocated to Georgia's territorial waters, only five nautical miles from my country's coastline, which clearly contravenes not only national legislation but also international practice and the universally recognized norms and principles of international law. We call upon the Russian side to leave Georgia's territorial waters immediately.

Once again I would like to highlight the importance of the problems that have already been raised in this forum a number of times during previous debates. Unfortunately, time and again, we have to reiterate that the problems I will raise are not yet resolved.

I would like to draw the Committee's attention in particular to issues related to protracted conflicts which pose a major threat to international peace, security and development — specifically those in two secessionist regions of Georgia: Abkhazia and the former autonomous region of South Ossetia, where an unprecedented and aggressive process of militarization is under way. It is clear to everyone, bearing in mind the very limited resources at the disposal of separatists, who is providing expertise, weapons and ammunitions to secessionists for those activities.

A large-scale military exercise was held in Abkhazia recently, from 24 to 26 September. That event offered a display of military detachments as well as several armoured vehicles. Ironically, we were able to follow the entire process of those military exercises on a daily basis on Russian television channels.

Most alarmingly, those exercises were held under the very eyes of the peacekeeping forces of the Commonwealth of Independent States, carried out entirely by the Russian military forces, which did nothing to prevent these actions. This is not, by the way, the first time that this has happened.

As a result of this process, a substantial amount of arms and ammunition which are beyond the control of the State and consequently are not reflected in the records of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms have accumulated in those lawless territories. My delegation would like to underline once again that the process of the uncontrolled spread of armaments in the lawless territories represents a major threat to the stability of the entire region.

Another issue of concern to us is the illegitimate presence of a Russian military base in Gudauta, in the breakaway region of Abkhazia. That military base was to be withdrawn as long ago as 2001. The Russian side has stated several times that the base had already been disbanded. Despite the numerous requests made by Georgia, full-scale monitoring by the international independent monitoring team has not yet been carried out. The reason given by the Russian side for its refusal is the lack of a secure environment in the area, which, as we all are aware, is under the control of the secessionist regime.

Accordingly, we consider that, until the international monitoring group is allowed to verify the situation on the ground, the Russian side has not fulfilled its commitment with regard to the Gudauta base.

Regrettably, these situations, as well as similar ongoing developments in the conflict zones on the

territory of Georgia, are beyond national and international disarmament and non-proliferation control mechanisms. Georgia fully shares the common concern that the problem of the uncontrolled accumulation and spread of arms poses a real threat to human security and peace, and hinders the peacebuilding process. Accordingly, we call upon all Member States to take note of the fact that these are problems that the international community should handle.

Before concluding, I wish to assure you, Madam Chairperson, of the Georgian delegation's full readiness to cooperate with you in your efforts to achieve the objectives and goals of this important body.

**Mr. Adjagba** (Togo) (*spoke in French*): First and foremost, I should like to congratulate you, Madam, on your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee and for the outstanding manner in which you have been guiding our work. I should like also to convey to the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, Mr. Nobuaki Tanaka, our most sincere thanks for the introductory statement he made to the Committee at the beginning of the general debate.

While aligning itself with the statements made by the representative of Nigeria on behalf of Africa and by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, the Togolese delegation would like to emphasize the fact that it shares the concern expressed by the Under-Secretary-General with regard to the low level of interest shown in crucial disarmament issues and non-proliferation questions during the general debate of the General Assembly at its current session. However, as all are aware, these issues represent some of the most serious challenges facing our world today.

Indeed, in his report on the work of the Organization, the Secretary-General emphasized, quite rightly, the lack of progress achieved recently with regard to the adoption by the international community of a common position on issues pertaining to non-proliferation and disarmament. In the view of the Secretary-General, it is a matter of concern to note that the international community continues to vacillate between a resolute stance whereby members of the community would resolutely commit themselves to controlling the proliferation of arms, taking the path of negotiation, and the more dangerous position whereby weapons of mass destruction themselves become the currency of negotiations and international relations.

In that regard, Togo has consistently advocated the principle of general and complete disarmament under international control. Thus, in his statement during the general debate, the head of the Togolese delegation, expressed, at the current session of the General Assembly, his regret that the efforts under way by the community of nations have not led to concrete results.

By way of illustration, let me say that in 2005 the international community did not reach any agreement to strengthen the foundations of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), just as the Summit of September 2005 was unable to adopt a common position on non-proliferation and disarmament.

Furthermore, the events we are witnessing, especially on the Korean peninsula, pose a serious threat to international peace and security. Similarly, the threat of non-State actors' obtaining weapons of mass destruction in order to carry out terrorist attacks with catastrophic consequences, has not been eliminated. In addition, when we consider the astronomical sums that some countries are spending on the arms race, when we have every reason to believe that our world will not manage to reduce poverty by half by 2015 for lack of funding, it becomes clear that we should do our utmost to break the deadlock in international negotiations and once again make disarmament the focus of the international community's priorities.

During the general debate, the head of the Togolese delegation also emphasized the need for the General Assembly to devote particular attention to the issue of the proliferation of small arms. Taking into the account the ravages caused by such weapons in certain parts of the world, especially in Africa, we can only deplore the inability shown in July 2006 by the United Nations Conference to reach an agreement in the context of the Conference to Review the Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eliminate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects.

However, the efforts made at the regional level deserve the support of the international community. That applies to the adoption in June 2006 by the States of the Economic Community of West Africa (ECOWAS) of the Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons, Their Ammunition and Other Related Materials.

With regard to the combat against the proliferation of and illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, we believe that the Regional Disarmament Centres have a crucial role to play. To that end, the Togolese delegation would like to refer to the serious situation being experienced b the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa. As the Secretary-General rightly emphasized in his report contained in document A/61/137, that institution is facing chronic financing difficulties with regard to the consultative mechanism established by the Secretary-General pursuant to resolution 60/86 and has not been able to find an adequate solution.

Furthermore, the lack of human resources available to the Regional Centre means that it has not been able to plan or carry out programmes that might benefit from voluntary contributions on the part of countries or donor organizations.

Togo, for its part, will continue to lend its support to the Regional Centre.

Togo would like to thank those countries that have recently made contributions to the Regional Centre and urges them to continue to provide financial support to the institution, which, in the current context, should play a primary role in Africa in the areas of disarmament, confidence-building and peacebuilding.

The Togolese delegation expresses the hope that the interactive meeting on the Regional Centres, to take place on 17 October, will allow us to achieve new guidelines for strengthening and revitalizing the Regional Centres in Africa, Latin American and the Caribbean, Asia and the Pacific.

**Mr. Ehouzou** (Benin) (*spoke in French*): We wish to congratulate you most warmly, Madam, and take this opportunity also to express our appreciation to the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, Mr. Nobuaki Tanaka, for the very informative statement he made at the beginning of this general debate. My delegation agrees with his analysis while associating itself with the statements made by the representatives of Indonesia and of Nigeria, on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and of the African Group, respectively.

For centuries now, humanity has dreamed of building an unarmed peace, maintained through confidence and harmony among nations. In the twelfth century, the crossbow was considered a terrifying weapon, and the concerns of humankind focused on the control of its use. In 1139 that issue was the subject of an international conference convened by Pope Innocent II. However, the technological process achieved since then have multiplied our concerns with regard to the capacity for harm of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery and in particular with regard to the illicit trade in conventional weapons, especially small arms and light weapons. Their harmful consequences, which have certain and real repercussions for international peace and security, are equal only to those of weapons of mass destruction.

During the sixtieth session, we made considerable efforts to promote disarmament in all categories of weapons. However, the results obtained were below the expectations of our peoples. Despite the adoption of a political declaration on the marking and tracing of small arms and light weapons, the disarmament machinery remained at a standstill, despite the initiatives taken at various levels to relaunch it.

The various aspects of this paralysis were described in detail by those speakers that have addressed this issue since the opening of the sixty-first session. My delegation believes that the current situation in the disarmament field is due to a lack of genuine political will among Member States to begin a sincere dialogue and to pave the way for effective negotiations in the areas deemed priority issues so as to reduce the threats to humankind.

Given that situation, Benin urges all nuclear-weapon States and other weapons of mass destruction to show greater sensitivity to the aspirations of humankind to live in a world free of the threat of annihilation resulting from the accumulation of such arms in the world.

It is necessary to abide strictly by existing disarmament agreements. With that in mind, more sustained attention should be devoted to strengthening international cooperation for the effective elimination of arms stockpiles that are the subject of bilateral or multilateral disarmament agreements. That should take place with strict respect for the norms governing safety and environmental protection. That would contribute greatly to preventing the acquisition of weapons of mass destruction by terrorists.

At the same time, it is important to negotiate and conclude new verifiable, non-discriminatory and

irreversible disarmament agreements, so as to move humankind away from the edge of the nuclear abyss.

Benin unreservedly rejects all attempts at the modernization of weapons of mass destruction and the trivialization of atomic weapons, as well as new geo-strategic doctrines that allow the use of such weapons in the battlefield. Currently, as suspicion grows between nuclear-weapon States and those that see in the acquisition of such weapons a guarantee of their security, the fight against the proliferation of nuclear weapons cannot be effective and efficient in the absence of legally binding negative security assurances and as long as vertical proliferation is not combated with equal vigour as is horizontal proliferation, as both are equally pernicious.

Aside from all other considerations, expanding consensus on the principle of the prohibition of the production of fissile material for the manufacturing of new nuclear weapons is an urgent task for the United Nations. The disarmament machinery should focus on this fully. In that respect, it is important that the working groups of the Disarmament Commission be mandated to hold informal consultations on issues under their purview in between the formal sessions of the Commission.

On the other hand, non-nuclear-weapon States must show commitment and respect for their obligations derived from the letter and the spirit of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

Irreversibly renouncing the acquisition of nuclear weapons should go hand in hand with engaging in unreserved cooperation in the area of promoting the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, in other words, for development.

The creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones can greatly contribute to strengthening peace and security at the regional level if it is the result of inclusive negotiations and if the zones thus created enjoy the effective recognition of nuclear-weapon States.

In the area of conventional weapons, the eradication of the illicit trade in such arms remains the focus of our concerns. Following the failure of the Conference on the 2001 Programme of Action, the countries victims of the proliferation of small arms and light weapons are now turning to the First Committee, in the hope that it will serve as a framework to adopt a follow-up mechanism which will allow for the multilateral monitoring of the implementation of the Programme of Action and a periodic evaluation by the United Nations of the progress made and the difficulties encountered in that respect.

It is important, therefore, that the biennial periodicity of the assessment be retained, as well as the principle of holding a five-year review conference. It is urgent to find appropriate solutions with a view to the effective implementation of the Programme of Action and to ensure that the developing countries which are affected by the proliferation of light weapons receive the necessary assistance to help them combat this scourge. It is important that the working group on illicit brokering start its activities soon.

Benin supports the initiatives taken by certain countries to launch a process of intergovernmental consultations to elaborate an internationally binding instrument on the import, export and transfer of conventional weapons. Such an instrument must, we believe, prohibit the transfer of such arms to non-State actors if they are not duly authorized by Government of those States of which they are nationals. It must also establish non-discriminatory standards that will preserve the right to self-defence of all States.

From that perspective, the new Convention that has just been adopted by the member States of the Economic Community of West Africa (ECOWAS) constitutes a reference point to be taken into consideration, particularly when it comes to establishing the principle of the increased responsibility of producer countries.

Benin pays tribute here to the European Union, which has decided, within the framework of promoting the inclusion of developing countries in international trade, to adopt the "Everything but arms" initiative. That initiative allows for the free trade of goods between African, Caribbean and Pacific countries and the European Economic Community, with the exception of weapons. We believe that that concept should prevail in relations between the North and the South.

We must give it greater substance and a stronger spirit, and it must be non-selective. That concept must be applied. That is why there is astonishment at the ease with which the countries of the South acquire weapons through a trade that certain developed countries conduct freely while, on the other hand,

doing nothing to fulfil international commitments with regard to official development assistance.

My country believes that there is an intrinsic link between development and disarmament. So long as we progress along the path of disarmament, we will be able to obtain sufficient resources to finance development. The international community must mobilize to prevent the channelling of the wealth generated by humankind into research on and the creation of new weapons of mass destruction and fine-tuning those that already exist, at a time when the world is concerned with seeking new sources of financing for the mobilization of additional resources for development, as we agreed in the Monterrey Consensus. It is not an illusion to believe that the substantial savings that could be made by means of an effective reduction in military expenditures would allow for a more effective struggle against poverty and the translation into reality of the Millennium Development Goals, in order to give poor countries, and in particular the least developed countries, the possibility of building a decent existence that would be a bulwark of peace and security in a world where tension would be replaced by harmony and where well-being and prosperity would be more equitably enjoyed.

**Mr. Polurez** (Ukraine): I should like to start, Madam, by extending to you my warmest congratulations on your election to the chairmanship of the Committee and wishing you every success in this endeavour. Please be assured of my delegation's full support and cooperation.

The delegation of Ukraine fully associates itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Finland on behalf of the European Union. I would like to take this opportunity to address some additional issues which are of considerable importance for Ukraine.

It goes without saying that in today's global security environment, the strengthening of international instruments and regimes aimed at preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery and a broad range of arms control issues remain a top priority for the world community. The inability to agree on set of commitments in this area that we witnessed recently could seriously undermine collective efforts to promote peace and security, thereby weakening the capacity of every State to address current threats and challenges.

A broad and comprehensive concept is needed to counter effectively the risks which may arise from the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. In that regard, the European Security Strategy, which promotes the universalization and reinforcement of multilateral agreements related to weapons of mass destruction, export control regimes and the criminalization of prohibited activities, as well as the enhancement of the relevant physical protection provisions, constitutes a good basis for consolidating our efforts and translating our aspirations into concrete actions.

We all must restate our commitments to multilateralism as a core principle in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation, with a view to shoring up and enhancing the efficiency of the relevant international agreements, in particular the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC) and the Chemicals Weapons Convention (CWC); and to reinforcing the role of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in sustaining an environment where the peaceful use of nuclear energy can be secured.

However, while the right of every nation to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes must be safeguarded, full adherence to commitments undertaken in the field of non-proliferation are required. I would like to stress the fact that the universal adoption and proper implementation of the strengthened safeguards system is a prerequisite for an effective and credible nuclear non-proliferation regime. On its part, my country ratified the Protocol Additional to the IAEA safeguards in November 2005.

Ukraine has repeatedly stated that the NPT is the cornerstone of the global non-proliferation regime and the essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament. Ukraine, which shares the general disappointment over the 2005 NPT Review Conference outcome, is nevertheless determined to contribute actively to the next Treaty review cycle in order to achieve tangible results in all three areas of the NPT.

We find encouraging this year's focused debates on the issue of a fissile material cut-off treaty in the framework of the Conference on Disarmament, where no objection was raised to the principle of treaty negotiation. The commencement of that process and the conclusion of a non-discriminatory, universally applicable treaty prohibiting the production of fissile

material for nuclear weapons not only will break the longstanding impasse in the Conference on Disarmament but also contribute significantly to combating nuclear proliferation in practice.

I would also like to reiterate the vital importance of the universalization of the CTBT. We call upon all States, particularly those listed in annex II of the Treaty, to accede to the CTBT without delay and unconditionally. Pending the Treaty's entry into force, Ukraine — which currently holds the chairmanship of the CTBT Preparatory Commission — calls on all States to refrain from any action not in keeping with the Treaty.

Notwithstanding the inability of States parties to agree on an outcome document at this year's Review Conference on the Programme of Action, the illicit trade in and uncontrolled accumulation of small arms and light weapons remain among the greatest impediments to sustainable development, conflict prevention and post-conflict peacebuilding. Ukraine is a devoted advocate of efforts within the United Nations system and at the regional level to address the issue of small arms and light weapons in all its aspects. As a firm supporter of practical steps at the national level to ensure effective implementation of the Programme of Action and of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Document on Small Arms and Light Weapons, Ukraine attaches particular importance to the destruction of excessive stockpiles of those kinds of weapon and related ammunition.

With regard to the issue of regulating the global trade in conventional arms, Ukraine supports the initiative on the international arms trade treaty, which could become a comprehensive instrument for establishing common standards in this field, thus preventing the proliferation of conventional arms.

The issue of decommissioned conventional ammunition in Ukraine remains a grave problem that is causing serious humanitarian, development, ecological and economic concerns. The explosions which took place in August 2006 at the Novobohdanivka ammunition depot were but added proof of the need to take steps towards the practical resolution of the problem without delay.

The Soviet legacy of millions of tonnes of conventional ammunition in Ukraine poses a direct threat to the health of peoples and to security and the environment. The problem can be resolved effectively only through the consolidation of international efforts aimed at preventing decommissioned conventional ammunition from threatening the lives of millions of people.

It is my pleasure to inform delegations that, on 1 June 2006, Ukraine became a fully fledged party to the Ottawa Convention. Fruitful cooperation with the European Commission on the destruction of stockpiles of anti-personnel landmines ensured the ratification of the Convention by the Ukrainian parliament last year. Ukraine has taken on its new obligation with a strong sense of responsibility and remains open to constructive cooperation so as to ensure the timely implementation of all of the Convention's crucial provisions.

As a State party to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) as well as its amendment and all its protocols, Ukraine is fully committed to comprehensive compliance with those instruments. In the light of the upcoming Third Review Conference of the States Parties to the Convention, to be held in November 2006, Ukraine agrees that there is a need to reinforce the effectiveness of the CCW as an essential tool aimed at reducing the negative consequences of both conventional warfare operations and their aftermath.

Ukraine, which is among those States which initially adhered to Protocol V on Explosive Remnants of War, welcomed the entry into force of that important instrument on 12 November 2006. The universalization of the Protocol will contribute to the strengthening of international humanitarian law as well as to consolidating efforts to address the negative impacts of explosive remnants of war.

To conclude, I would like to underline the urgency of consolidating international efforts so as to achieve progress in the areas of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control, in the United Nations and in other forums, for the sake of future generations.

**Mr. Okio** (Congo) (*spoke in French*): Madam Chairperson, I should like, on behalf of the Congo, to congratulate you warmly on your well-deserved election, as well as the other members of the Bureau. My delegation wishes also to thank the Secretariat for the technical support given us.

It is no doubt an advantage to take the floor on the last day of the general debate of the First

Committee, after hearing a large number of statements, some of them made by eminent persons. This year, we learned that our concerns are even greater given the setbacks in the area of disarmament and in the implementation of the numerous resolutions adopted year after year.

Following the disappointing outcome of the May 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and of the September 2005 World Summit, at which Member States were unable to arrive at a common position on non-proliferation and disarmament, we were surprised, in July 2006, by the failure of the Conference to Review the Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eliminate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects.

As military expenditures continue to rise, countries are deeply divided on the issue of disarmament, which is giving rise to great concern on the part of the international community. Indeed, there is a threat looming over humankind.

However, the international community seems to be distancing itself from the significant progress made in the 1990s, and especially that made in 2000 at the Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT, where encouraging commitments were made with a view to the implementation of the provisions of the Treaty, as the Secretary-General so aptly put it in his report on the work of the Organization (A/60/1).

Non-respect of those commitments could intensify the much-feared phenomenon of proliferation, both horizontally and vertically. That would not send a clear and firm message to terrorists. Only a responsible, non-selective approach to the implementation of the NPT can in the long term lead to universal acceptance of the Treaty, which remains the cornerstone of the nuclear non-proliferation regime, the foundation of nuclear disarmament, and the framework for the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

Ten years after the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) signing ceremony on 10 September 1996 in New York, the Treaty has not yet entered into force, despite the fact that the international situation requires that the process be accelerated and that the moratorium on nuclear tests be maintained until the Treaty has entered into force. We therefore urge those States that have not yet done so to sign or ratify the Treaty. It is important that we redouble our efforts with a view to achieving our goals.

The failure of the Conference to Review the Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects is of particular importance for the Congo, given its location on a continent that has suffered all too much from the devastating effects of small arms and light weapons. The Congo therefore calls on all States present to commit themselves once again with determination and in a spirit of solidarity to overcoming the difficulties ahead and to devote the required attention to combating and eliminating that scourge. On our continent, such arms are truly weapons of mass destruction, as is daily evident.

Congo also renews its commitment with a view to achieving the universalization of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction.

With regard to these questions and others before us, we would reaffirm our commitment to multilateralism. By working together, we can spare our world the consequences of current and future threats. It is the responsibility of us all to history and to future generations to promote and to strengthen the various multilateral instruments in order to reduce the threat that weapons of mass destruction and conventional weapons pose for humankind.

In 2006 the United Nations showed clearly that the maintenance of peace was the focus of its concerns. Peacekeeping operations were strengthened, and in some cases, peacekeeping became peacebuilding — in Burundi and in Sierra Leone, among others countries. That transformation was qualitative as well as quantitative. That allowed for positive developments in Haiti, Liberia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. However, recent experience in Timor-Leste — a friendly country — where there was a resurgence of violence a year after the departure of the Blue Helmets in May 2005, is a reminder that we must provide countries in such fragile situations with comprehensive, possible long-term support. We are certain that the Peacebuilding Commission, which is being set up in a proactive and systematic manner, will play a useful role in coordinating reconstruction efforts for countries in post-conflict situations.

Issues of peace and security lie at the heart of the Congo's regional and subregional policies, in keeping with General Assembly resolutions on confidence-building measures at the regional and subregional levels, the most recent of which is resolution 60/64 of 8 December 2005. That is the basis for Congo's active participation in the Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa. Congo reiterates the importance of that Committee for our region, some of whose States are gradually emerging from protracted internal conflicts, where efforts must be made to promote a climate of peace and security. The Committee, as the representative of Cameroon has noted, has contributed a great deal to our region since its establishment. In order to discharge its mandate, the Committee needs resources. We therefore renew our call for voluntary contributions to the Committee's Trust Fund aimed at financing its extrabudgetary activities.

Finally, we hope that the decision taken at the Committee's twenty-fourth ministerial meeting, held at Kigali from 25 to 29 September 2006, on the convening in 2007 of a subregional conference in 2007 to address transborder security issues will receive the necessary support from donors and various partners.

It is only through dialogue and cooperation that we will be able to face the threats of the proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and their means of delivery. Congo hopes that the work of our Committee will allow us to find new ways of promoting consensus on the issues before us.

**Mr. Pak Gil Yon** (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): Madam Chairperson, at the outset, allow me to warmly congratulate you on your assumption of the chairmanship of the First Committee and to wish you every success.

The hopes of peoples for a nuclear-free world following the end of the cold war have been dashed, and the danger of a nuclear war is increasing with each passing day. The dependence of the nuclear Powers on nuclear weapons, far from decreasing, is on the rise.

Recently, sessions of the Disarmament Commission and of other multinational forums for disarmament failed to reach a consensus on disarmament issues, including nuclear disarmament, and are now deadlocked. That is attributable mainly to the policy of nuclear domination pursued by some countries based on their selfish interests and their desire for world hegemony.

Nuclear weapons are used openly by the super-Power as a means of threatening and blackmailing sovereign States and undermining their sovereignty and security. It is a reality that, unless we put an end to attempts to dominate through nuclear weapons and the threat thereof, no progress can be expected in discussing disarmament issues as a whole, to say nothing of nuclear disarmament in particular.

For the sake of world peace and security, nuclear disarmament should be put into practice as a priority, and all nuclear weapons should be eliminated from the globe.

Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation are inseparably related, but the principal objective is nuclear disarmament. The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is the result of the threat posed by existing nuclear weapons. Unfortunately, however, some countries differentiate between the existence of nuclear weapons and their proliferation and persist with their assertions on the issue of non-proliferation alone.

This, in fact, shows that their real intention is to evade nuclear-weapon disarmament. Non-proliferation without nuclear disarmament makes no sense. The international order will undergo a noticeable and substantial change if the gangster-like logic that only big countries can possess nuclear weapons and attack and threaten small countries with them continues to be allowed and tolerated. Moreover, this will inevitably result in compelling non-nuclear States to possess a nuclear deterrent force.

Today, such high-handed policies on nuclear weapons, which are based on a double standard, have reduced the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and other disarmament conventions to dead letters that are of no use and that lack binding force — a sure way of plunging the world into a nuclear arms race.

There can be no justification for the fact that certain countries take issue with the peaceful nuclear activities of countries they detest, while evading their obligations to disarm their own nuclear weapons. The peaceful use of nuclear energy is not a privilege conceded to specific countries but the legitimate right of sovereign States. Today many countries opt for

building strong defence capabilities for the purpose of self-defence. That is because all arms control treaties, including the NPT, fail to protect the security of non-nuclear States.

All nuclear Powers should give up their nuclear doctrines based on the pre-emptive use of nuclear weapons and commit themselves unconditionally to the non-use of nuclear weapons pre-emptively, as demanded by the non-nuclear-weapon States. They must come to the negotiation table to draft an international convention in that respect.

The nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula, which has become a focus for the international community, is the outcome of a nuclear-threat policy based on the United States' hostile policy towards the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, pursued for over half a century. The United States threatens the Democratic People's Republic of Korea with its nuclear weapons and has designated it as a target for pre-emptive attack, compelling it to possess a nuclear deterrence force as a self-defence measure.

History and present realities have shown us that only when a country has a powerful force can it defend its national dignity, sovereignty and independence.

It is a reality today that, be it a missile launch or a nuclear test, as long as it is approved by the United States, it is tolerated and will not be brought before the United Nations.

In that regard, my delegation wishes to draw the Committee's attention to the fact that during the general debate some countries disregarded the substance of the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula. Those countries urged the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to abandon its nuclear programme, neglecting to consider the root causes of the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula. They sought only to flatter the United States by supporting that country's hostile policy toward the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, rather than promoting a genuine and fair resolution of the nuclear issue.

The logic in vogue nowadays is that the United States' threat of a pre-emptive nuclear strike against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is in the interest of peace and security, while the countermeasures taken by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea represent threats to peace and security, which does not go down well with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea or others who cherish justice.

In today's world, where the law of the jungle prevails, the only ones that can champion justice are the strong. Today, thanks to the Songun policy of defending socialism and peace with an army, we have to date been able to safeguard our sovereignty and prevent a war on the Korean peninsula, despite the persistent political, military and economic efforts of hostile forces to stifle the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

The denuclearization of the Korean peninsula is our ultimate goal. We remain unchanged in our will to realize such denuclearization through dialogue and negotiation, as we undertook in the September 19 Joint Statement.

However, no sooner had the Joint Statement been made public than the United States applied economic sanctions against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and stepped up its pressure from every angle. In addition, the United States has stood in the way of the implementation of the Joint Statement, using all means available, including threats, blackmail and a large-scale military exercise targeted at the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea will continue to make efforts to counter the threat posed by outside forces and to ensure lasting peace on the Korean peninsula in future as well.

**Mr. Vohidov** (Uzbekistan) (*spoke in Russian*): Madam Chairperson, allow me to join in the congratulations expressed to you on your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee. I would like to assure you and the other members of the Bureau of the full support of the delegation of Uzbekistan in your efforts to effectively and fruitfully carry out the work of the Committee.

During the current session of the General Assembly, the majority of Member States have once again reaffirmed the importance of collective efforts in ensuring international peace and security. That understanding is essential in circumstances in which the international community is facing a growing number of threats and challenges in the area of security, disarmament and non-proliferation.

In our view, the lack of progress in recent years in multilateral talks does not mean that all possibilities

have been lost for the adoption by States of urgent and effective measures to prevent the erosion of the international regime to monitor and prohibit weapons of mass destruction. We recognize that the continued development of the Central Asian region at this decisive stage will depend to a significant extent on a correct understanding of the nature of existing threats and the timely identification of their sources and interrelationships.

The primary threat to the region is that of the proliferation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. The signing in Semipalatinsk on 8 September last of a treaty making Central Asia a nuclear-weapon-free zone is proof that, on the basis of the experience already gained by the international community and of previous legal documents, States can together ensure security, stability and peace in the region and create the necessary conditions for the development and prosperity of their peoples.

Nine years ago, the States of Central Asia — Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan — took a decision based on their obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) to create a new system of security, taking into consideration the special characteristics of the region — a system that would be the first regional security mechanism in Central Asia.

By their example, the States of the region are endeavouring to reaffirm the fact that nuclear-weapon-free zone, as part and parcel of this regime, significantly contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security at the regional and global levels.

Recent events in the area of nuclear non-proliferation bear witness to the timeliness and relevance of the idea of creating a Central Asian nuclear-weapon-free zone, which was voiced 13 years ago, here at the United Nations during the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly, by the President of Uzbekistan, Mr. Karimov.

May I express our most sincere gratitude to all Member States, international Organizations and non-governmental organizations that warmly congratulated the Central Asian States on the creation of a Central Asian nuclear-weapon-free zone.

I should like to note the considerable support provided in that respect by the United Nations and by the Secretary-General personally. The Department for Disarmament Affairs and the Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific and the Office of Legal Affairs throughout the entire process of the creation of the Central Asian nuclear-weapon-free zone.

Such cooperation has helped to achieve a breakthrough in the deadlock situation of the non-proliferation regime.

Against that backdrop, it is somewhat surprising that the legal framework of the treaty was not reflected in the most recent general statement issued by the Department for Disarmament Affairs, which was directly involved in all of the work on that treaty.

We believe that the following factors should underlie any consensus in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation.

First, any efforts in this field should be undertaken solely on a multilateral basis, taking into account the views of the majority of Member States. The system for the evaluation of threats and challenges should be a unified one.

Secondly, the point of departure for any further multilateral negotiations should be compliance by States with their already existing obligations within the framework of international treaties on disarmament issues.

Thirdly, there is a need further to strengthen multilateral measures designed to combat the black market in nuclear materials and technology and the threat posed by the increasing activities of terrorist groups and their attempts to obtain components of weapons of mass destruction.

In that connection, we welcome the global initiative proposed by Russia and the United States to combat acts of nuclear terrorism, and we support the strengthening of the regime established by Security Council resolution 1540 (2004).

Fourthly, the role of non-nuclear States in international relations must be amplified. We must create a system of universal and unconditional guarantees for the security of non-nuclear States.

I am certain that all conditions are present for the successful conclusion of the work of the Committee. The delegation of Uzbekistan would like to express its

full readiness to cooperate with all delegations and Member States in achieving that task.

**Mr. Danesh-Yazdi** (Islamic Republic of Iran): Madam Chairperson, at the outset, I should like to seize this opportunity to congratulate you on your assumption of the chairmanship of this body. I am confident that your diplomatic skills are an important asset that will allow the Committee to achieve a positive outcome this year. I would like also to congratulate the other members of the Bureau on their election.

I would like to associate my delegation with the statement delivered in this Committee by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The Islamic Republic of Iran, which has been a victim of weapons of mass destruction, has bitter experience of extensive chemical attacks against its military and its civilian population, which resulted in a large number of casualties. Since the end of the war imposed on Iran by the regime of Saddam Hussein, which was supported by certain Western countries, we have been, and still are, witnessing the daily sufferings of the thousands of chemical-weapons victims throughout our country. With such a sad and harsh experience in its past, Iran is highly motivated to pursue the elimination of all weapons of mass destruction and regards them as inhumane and dangerous tools detrimental to all human communities. As a matter of principle, Iran will spare no effort to achieve the lofty goal of comprehensive disarmament in the field of weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear disarmament.

We welcome the establishment — in our immediate neighbourhood — of the first nuclear-weapon-free zone located entirely in the northern hemisphere, namely the Central Asian Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone. My delegation congratulates the five Central Asian States — Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan — that signed the treaty creating a nuclear-weapon-free-zone in the region. That treaty, which forbids third countries from transporting nuclear weapons through or storing materials on the territory of Central Asia, is an important step towards a world free from nuclear weapons. Indeed, the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones is a major step towards nuclear disarmament.

Notwithstanding this significant event, regrettably, 30 years after the adoption of the General Assembly resolution, initially proposed by Iran, on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, no progress has been achieved towards its realization because of the intransigent policy of Israel. It is worth mentioning that the only existing obstacle to the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East is the non-adherence of that regime to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and its continued clandestine operation of unsafeguarded nuclear facilities, with the help and technological assistance of the United States. That regime has paid no attention to the continuing international call made in different forums, particularly at the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT, at which 187 countries called on that regime by name to accede to the NPT immediately and unconditionally.

Moreover, that regime has never been a party to the other international instruments on weapons of mass destruction, namely the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological Weapons Convention, due to its biological and chemical weapons programmes. Ironically — and this is indeed ridiculous — the Israeli regime, a non-member of the NPT, whose nuclear arsenal, coupled with its expansionist and State terrorism policies, which is repeatedly recognized as the single most serious threat to regional peace and security, cries wolf about Iran's peaceful nuclear programme and has launched a campaign of threats, lies, deception and blackmail against Iran. Those who are misled and manipulated by that campaign are in fact serving the interests of the Israeli regime.

The threat posed by the accumulation of an estimated 27,000 nuclear weapons in nuclear-weapon States remains a grave worldwide concern. The lack of progress towards nuclear disarmament and the failure of certain nuclear-weapon States to fulfil their obligations regarding the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals, as well as their new military doctrines based on the threat of use of nuclear weapons, continue to pose a threat to the international community.

We should not lose sight of the fact that the only country that has ever used nuclear weapons during a conflict, namely the United States, still maintains a sizeable arsenal of thousands of nuclear warheads, of which many are operational and the remainder are in reserve or stockpiled. Many of those warheads are

deployed on land-based missile systems, on bombers and on submarines. Hundreds of tactical nuclear weapons, which consist of Tomahawk land attack cruise missiles and B-61 bombs, are ready to use. The United States has deployed nuclear weapons at bases in several European NATO countries, in clear violation of the provisions of the NPT. Moreover, it continues to engage in the vertical proliferation of nuclear weapons by pursuing vigorously the development of new types of mini-, easy-to-use nuclear weapons and building new facilities for the production of fissile material for new nuclear weapons. Just one example — according to the United States National Nuclear Security Administration, the United States will be able to make plutonium pits for as many as 30 to 40 new warheads per year after 2010, in Los Alamos.

The United States is also proliferating nuclear weapons horizontally by transferring technology and materials to non-members of the NPT whose unsafeguarded nuclear facilities are aimed at the production and development of nuclear weapons. Furthermore, no progress has been made in assuring the non-nuclear weapon States parties to the NPT against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons through a universal, unconditional and legally binding instrument. All of those developments have put in jeopardy the future of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

The international community should vigorously pursue the nuclear disarmament obligations agreed at the 1995 and 2000 NPT Review Conferences, particularly at the upcoming meeting of the Preparatory Committee of the 2010 NPT Review Conference, as decided by General Assembly resolution 60/72 of 8 December 2005.

In that context, we are of the view that all nuclear disarmament obligations, in particular the 13 practical steps, are part of an integrated whole and should be implemented in full. Therefore, a piecemeal approach such as that proposed for the fissile material cutoff treaty falls short of addressing the issue at hand.

On the issue of missiles, my delegation wishes to express its gratitude for the new report of the Secretary-General which was prepared with the assistance of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) and the Department for Disarmament Affairs and submitted to the General Assembly pursuant to resolution 59/67. That report is duly reflected in this year's resolution on "Missiles", sponsored by Egypt, Indonesia and Iran. It will be a valuable contribution to the third Panel of Governmental Experts, which will hold its first session from 11 to 15 June 2007. We expect that the Panel will succeed in fulfilling its mandate by identifying areas where consensus can be reached on the issue of missiles in all its aspects.

With respect to the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), the Sixth Review Conference, which will take place later this year, is an important event in the follow-up of developments relating to the Convention. In that context, my delegation would like to remind the States parties to the BWC that the Islamic Republic of Iran has formally renewed its proposal for the amendment of the Convention on the prohibition of the use of biological weapons and expects that this issue will be discussed thoroughly.

Before concluding, I would like to touch on the important issue of the inalienable right of the States parties to the NPT to the peaceful use of nuclear energy. That inalienable right originates from two broader propositions. First, scientific and technological achievements are the common heritage of humanity. Nuclear technology has broad applications ranging from medicine and agriculture to the provision of a renewable source of energy. No nation can monopolize any scientific or technological achievement, including nuclear technology. The few countries that already have access to all kinds of nuclear technologies cannot create new categories of "haves" and "have-nots" by pursuing a kind of nuclear technology apartheid policy.

Secondly, the NPT and all other international instruments are based on a general proposition that sets out the requisite balance between rights and obligations. That balance guarantees the longevity of the legal regime by providing incentives for membership and compliance. The provisions of the NPT and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Statute on the right to nuclear technology, as well as the imperative of cooperation and sharing of the technology among those who have accepted the obligations of non-proliferation, testify to the wisdom and understanding of their drafters.

However, in practice, we must guard against any further entrenchment of the impression that membership in the NPT and the IAEA safeguards regime constitutes an impediment to the peaceful use

of nuclear energy, while non-membership is rewarded by acquiescence, as in the case of the development of one of the largest stockpiles of nuclear weapons in the Middle East. If anything, its failure to accept NPT and safeguards obligations should have made the only outsider to the NPT in the region the subject of the most severe restrictions, not provided it with impunity.

Like all other members of the NPT, Iran considers the pursuit and development of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes to be its inalienable right, and it has therefore invested extensive human and material resources in that field. At the same time, as we have repeatedly stated, nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction have no place in Iran's defence doctrine. We categorically reject the misleading and unsubstantiated allegations made by the United States about Iran's peaceful nuclear programme. All reports issued by the IAEA since November 2003 have been indicative of the peaceful nature of the Iranian nuclear programme, and the Agency has repeatedly reaffirmed that it "has not seen indications of diversion of nuclear material to nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices".

In that context, my delegation would like to express its greatest appreciation to the 118 countries of the Non-Aligned Movement for their support and for the statement issued by their Heads of State and Government in Havana last month. The Movement's Heads of State and Government expressed their conviction that

> "the only way to resolve the issue is to resume negotiations without any preconditions and to enhance cooperation with the involvement of all necessary parties".

We have already demonstrated our readiness to restart talks, without any preconditions, by responding to the proposed package by the group of six countries, with goodwill and the intention of achieving a reasonable breakthrough, and we have tried to lay the groundwork for resolving Iran's nuclear issue by taking the constructive path of negotiation.

**Ms. Majali** (Jordan): Let me start, Madam, by congratulating you on your election as Chairperson of the Committee and by also congratulating the other members of the Bureau on their election. I wish to assure you of my delegation's support and cooperation. At the same time, I would also like to extend my delegation's sincere appreciation to your predecessor, Ambassador Oh Joon of the Republic of Korea, for having successfully conducted our work during the sixtieth session. My delegation also takes this opportunity to thank the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, Mr. Tanaka, as well as the rest of his team at the Department for Disarmament Affairs for their ongoing efforts. At this juncture, my delegation also associates itself with the statement made by the Ambassador of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

It is unfortunate that yet another opportunity was missed this year with the failure of the 2006 Conference to Review the Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eliminate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects to agree on a final follow-up document, reminding us once again of other recent disappointments, namely the failure of the 2005 seventh Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), and the inability to agree on the inclusion of any reference to disarmament and non-proliferation in the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document.

Yet despite the repeated disappointments and the continued non-compliance with, and non-entry into force of, key multilaterally negotiated disarmament treaties, we must not, as the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs rightly pointed out, let such events blind us to the achievements made to date, and, may I also add, those that it is still possible to make.

Given the difficulties we have been facing, my delegation believes that the First Committee provides us with a vital forum to pursue our deliberations on how best to address challenges and concerns in the area of international peace and security with regard to disarmament, non-proliferation and the threat posed both by weapons of mass destruction and by conventional arms, as we seek to find better ways to overcome the current impasse in much of our collective efforts and as we move ahead in discharging our mandated tasks.

In that context, the participation in our interactive debate of officials from the various institutions that constitute the United Nations disarmament machinery, as well as of established groups of governmental experts and non-governmental organizations, will provide a valuable impetus to our discussions.

This year it is encouraging to note that, although the Conference of Disarmament has once again failed to adopt a substantive report in agreeing on a balanced and comprehensive programme of work, it has nevertheless been able to conduct a focused and structured debate. We hope that similar positive developments will lead to agreement on a programme of work and to the commencement of negotiations on a fissile material cutoff treaty. The conclusion of a universal, unconditional and binding instrument that would provide comprehensive security guarantees to the non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the NPT also remains important.

Similarly, the Commission on Disarmament was able to agree last year on substantive agenda items, allowing it to resume a substantive session after three years of deadlock. Although it was not able to agree on a substantive report for its first session, it is hoped that future meetings will pave the way towards an agreement on recommendations on both agenda items currently under discussion.

The 2006 Conference to Review the Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eliminate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects did not, unfortunately, succeed, but it did represent an opportunity to reiterate our commitment to the Programme. The regrettable inability to agree on an outcome document or follow-up measures should not overshadow the fact that the Programme of Action still provides the necessary framework for our collective response at the national, regional and global levels.

That is important to note, as the numerous threats posed by the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons have devastating consequences and remain a matter of concern to all countries and regions. Since no State alone can address their risks and ramifications, they require a collective and concerted response. My delegation believes that the newly established Group of Governmental Experts on brokering will further our efforts in combating the illicit trade in these weapons.

While we should be pleased with the steady progress in the implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction, my delegation believes that there remains a need for the international community to mobilize resources and to provide the necessary assistance to landmine-clearance operations as well as for the rehabilitation of victims, including their social and economic reintegration in landmine-affected countries, so as to enable Member States to live up to their obligations under the Convention. The eighth Meeting of the States Parties to the Mine Ban Convention, to be held in 2007 and which my country is looking forward to hosting, will therefore be instrumental in further progress, as we will meet to reaffirm the commitments and obligations that remain to be implemented, so as to assist victims and prevent potential victims from experiencing the suffering engendered by the use and the continued existence of such weapons.

As a State party to the Ottawa Convention, Jordan has taken effective steps to comply with its provisions and hopes that it will be able to satisfy its treaty obligations by May 2009. Moreover, Jordan attaches great importance to attainment of the universality of the Convention and, in that vein, is currently playing an active role with its partners in promoting the Ottawa Convention in the Middle East region.

Jordan is party to all main international disarmament-related treaties and adheres fully to its obligations under them. In that regard, it stresses the need to reaffirm those instruments and calls for their universality, urging those States that have not signed or acceded to them to do so. The upcoming review conferences of the Convention on Biological and Toxin Weapons and the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons are therefore welcome opportunities to reiterate our commitments and enhance our undertakings in their areas of competence.

Last year my country welcomed the Fourth Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and views the Declaration it adopted as yet another important step towards demonstrating our collective commitment to nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. Next year the preparatory process for the 2010 NPT Review Conference will begin. My delegation believes that in this regard the international community should continue to strive to attain the goals of nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament, as set out in the international non-proliferation regime. Universal adherence to the NPT should still be pursued, as should the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

Furthermore, while respect for the inalienable right of developing countries to engage in the research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination should be stressed, it should also be recalled that all disputes arising in that context should be settled in a peaceful and diplomatic manner.

The creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones remains vital for maintaining the international non-proliferation regime and consolidating international peace and security. Jordan welcomes those established throughout the world, including the signing in September 2006, in Semipalatinsk, of the Treaty on a nuclear-weapon-free-zone by the five Central Asian countries. In that regard, my delegation reiterates that the establishment of a zone free from nuclear weapons in the Middle East region is of utmost importance. Israel's accession to the NPT is therefore vital in this regard, as it would defuse existing tensions, bring about tangible progress on other bilateral tracks of the peace process, enhance confidence-building measures between all parties, and have an overall positive impact on regional peace and security. Implementation of International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safety measures on its unsafeguarded nuclear facilities would furthermore prevent the occurrence of potential nuclear accidents and the risk of radiological contamination.

The urgent need to address the threats posed by the possibility of non-State actors or terrorists gaining access to weapons of mass destruction was addressed by the adoption and recent extension of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004). This year Jordan provided additional information to complement the report it submitted earlier on its implementation, upon request of the Committee.

Finally, let me conclude with an observation. After 61 years, a woman is finally chairing our Committee. Common collective wisdom should indicate that it should not take us as long to overcome the current challenges facing our work. Once again, I reiterate my delegation's full support and cooperation and hope for a successful outcome of our work.

**Mr. Vila Coma** (Andorra): Madam Chairperson, let me begin by congratulating you on your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee. Please be assured of the full support and cooperation of my delegation during the forthcoming session.

Andorra is a small country without an army that has lived in peace with its neighbours for more than 700 years. We neither produce nor export armaments. We do not purchase weapons. The issue of disarmament and non-proliferation is of great concern to us, however, as our security is guaranteed only by countries' collective desire to live in peace and security. It is therefore natural for us to persistently advocate for disarmament and pacifism in international forums. The Andorran people believe in the peaceful settlement of disputes coupled with a firm respect for international law.

Two issues in the nuclear field are of pressing concern at the current session. Andorra urges all parties currently engaged in the Iran nuclear talks to do their utmost to resolve their differences within a diplomatic framework so as not to escalate the current situation into one of far-reaching magnitude. Similarly, my delegation calls upon all States to abide by their international obligations and agreements. The current impasse on the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula is of deep concern to my delegation. Andorra urges all those parties involved in the six-party talks to resume their dialogue and reach a solution acceptable to all.

Andorra was also disappointed at the failure to come to any positive agreement either at the 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) or at the Conference to Review the Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eliminate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects earlier this year. Similarly, the lack of disarmament language in the 2005 Summit Outcome Document and the current deadlock in the Conference in Disarmament make it imperative for us to work at revitalizing the First Committee in order to come to agreement on concrete disarmament measures.

Andorra is pleased to be able to play its part in the disarmament process. In order to implement and promote the scope of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), Andorra is participating in a technical assistance programme for the monitoring of disarmament in sub-Saharan Africa for the period 2007-2009. We have also decided that Andorra will organize a United Nations training seminar on disarmament for the affected countries.

We welcome Viet Nam's recent ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), which was itself ratified by Andorra in July this year, and urge the remaining countries needed for the Treaty to come into force to ratify it at the earliest possible opportunity.

**The Chairperson**: I give the floor to the representative of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

**Mrs. Pellandini** (International Committee of the Red Cross): The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has for some years sought to highlight in this forum the humanitarian implications of the many life-and-death issues being discussed under the rubric of arms control and disarmament. Preventing and alleviating the suffering inflicted by weapons and armed conflict are indeed the focus of our daily work.

Significant progress has been possible in this field when it has been given a human face. The adoption of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction, the United Nations Programme of Action on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, and the Protocol on Explosive Remnants of War are among the best examples of what can be achieved. It was not so long ago that such issues were not even on the international agenda.

But far more needs to be done. The implementation of each of the agreements I mentioned presents a daunting challenge which will take years of determined effort. Despite the inconclusive Review Conference of the Programme of Action on Small Arms, the need to bring the availability of small arms and ammunition under stricter control is no less urgent. Initiatives at the national and regional levels remain an effective avenue for dealing with those issues — supported, where possible, by international normative frameworks.

Among the most important next steps in this field are continued work to implement existing commitments under the Programme of Action, the work of the upcoming Group of Governmental Experts on arms brokering, and efforts to develop an international arms trade treaty. The ICRC strongly supports such a treaty, which would define common standards for regulating arms transfers based on States' responsibilities under international law, including international humanitarian law. We are pleased in this regard to note the reference to this body of law in the draft resolution on this subject.

In less than a month, the Review Conference of States Parties to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) will convene in Geneva. As it is the central treaty which regulates conventional weapons on the basis of international humanitarian law, the ICRC takes a very active interest in that Convention.

A highlight of the Review Conference will undoubtedly be the entry into force on 12 November of the new Protocol on Explosive Remnants of War. We strongly urge all States which have not yet done so to ratify this landmark agreement and encourage States parties to begin making plans to develop the Protocol as an operational framework for addressing the growing global burden of explosive remnants of war. It is also time for States parties to conclude five years of work on anti-vehicle mines with the adoption of a new protocol which will significantly enhance the protection of civilians from such weapons — one of which destroyed an ICRC vehicle in the Casamance region of Senegal last month, killing one of our delegates and injuring others.

It is regrettable that progress has not been made in the CCW framework on the issue of cluster munitions. Problems with the accuracy and reliability of many types of cluster munitions have been repeatedly and lethally demonstrated in conflicts in most regions of the world over the past 35 years. Their disproportionate effects on the civilian population and the huge clearance burden they create are well known. The use of cluster munitions can no longer remain unregulated. Although we are encouraged by the increasing numbers of national policy changes regarding such weapons, we urge all States to deal with this matter urgently.

Concerning the Biological Weapons Convention, the Sixth Review Conference later this year will help demonstrate whether the community of States has the will and the wisdom to equip itself with the comprehensive measures it needs to protect itself from the hostile use of biological agents. As we stand at the dawn of the age of biotechnology, few challenges are more important than ensuring that the life sciences are used exclusively for the benefit of humanity. The ICRC's 2002 appeal on biotechnology, weapons and humanity highlighted the myriad developments in the

life sciences which can increase the lethality, target ability and deliverability of biological weapons while at the same time making them more difficult to detect and therefore more attractive. Given the extremely decentralized nature of work in the life sciences, the ICRC's appeal was addressed not only to Governments but to all life scientists and to the biotechnology industry. It called on all actors to assume their responsibility to prevent the hostile use of their knowledge and products.

It is the historic task of the upcoming BWC Review Conference to reaffirm the absolute prohibition on biological weapons contained in the Convention itself and in the 1925 Geneva Protocol, to call on life scientists and industry to join in concerted preventive efforts, and to establish a framework for prevention at the national and international levels. The BWC is a bulwark in the struggle to survive in the face of germs and disease. The ICRC urges States to spare no effort to ensure the effectiveness of that landmark agreement in face of the new challenges it faces.

**The Chairperson**: We have heard the last speaker in the general debate.

I shall now call on those representatives who wish to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

May I remind members that the number of interventions in the exercise of the right of reply for any delegation at a given meeting should be limited to two per item. The first intervention in the exercise of the right of reply for any delegation on any item at a given meeting should be limited to 10 minutes, and the second intervention should be limited to five minutes.

**Mr. Martirosyan** (Armenia): The Armenian delegation apologizes for taking the floor for the second time during the general debate, but I have to exercise our right of reply so as to make some comments regarding the intervention made by the Azerbaijani delegation last Friday.

The representative of Azerbaijan, in his reply to the statement made by the Armenian ambassador, accused him of telling lies and falsehoods, mentioning some distorted facts and misleading figures about the armed forces of the Republic of Armenia.

As for the allegations about falsehoods in the statement made by the Armenian ambassador, I should like to draw the Committee's attention to the following points.

First, the Armenian ambassador said in his statement that we were witnessing an unprecedented growth in the military budget of Azerbaijan, which had doubled and even tripled over the past few years. That enormous growth in military expenditures was called by the Armenian ambassador an obvious manifestation of an arms race policy. We failed to find any information about Azerbaijan's military standing in the reports of the Secretary-General on objective information on military matters, including transparency in military expenditures, for the last five years.

However, according to the information we have gleaned from the official website and official statements made by the leadership of that country, we have concluded that the military budget of Azerbaijan for 2007 is about $900 million, while in 2006 it was about $700 million. Back in 1999, the military budget of that country was only $121 million. Thus the military expenditures of Azerbaijan have increased about eightfold over the past eight years.

We believe that the policy of a country whose military budget is growing at such a rapid pace, coupled with an aggressive rhetoric of military bravado and warmongering used by the leadership of that country, can be called and considered an arms race policy.

Secondly, in his speech the Armenian ambassador expressed serious concerns over violations by Azerbaijan of the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty ceilings established for some categories of armaments. Indeed, if we look at the annual exchange of military information distributed within the framework of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), we can see that in 2005 Azerbaijan imported 44 battle tanks and 83 large-calibre artillery systems and did not declare any reduction in arms.

The ceilings for the aforementioned categories of armaments are 220 and 280. That country thus exceeded the ceilings in said categories by 41 and 61 units, respectively.

Concerning the fabricated facts and information on the armed forces of Armenia, I would like to point out that Armenia, as a CFE Treaty member country, strictly abides by the established ceilings. In that regard, I invite the members of the Committee to look at the relevant United Nations and OSCE reports and documents on arms control, where they can find accurate information on the Armenian armed forces.

**Mr. Mine** (Japan): Japan is one of the countries that was quoted by the Permanent Representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Ambassador Pak Gil Yon, as having urged the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to abandon its nuclear programme and exert maximum restraint as concerns nuclear tests. However, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea announced late last night that it had conducted a nuclear test. That act by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, combined with its build-up of ballistic missiles, which may be capable of delivering weapons of mass destruction, is a grave problem and raises extremely deep concerns. This is a serious challenge to Japan's security and is totally unacceptable.

Japan strongly protests the actions taken by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and categorically denounces them. Japan is considering taking swift and strict measures. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea must be solely responsible for this situation.

This nuclear test by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea poses a great threat to the peace and security not only of Japan but also of East Asia and the entire international community. This constitutes a serious challenge to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) regime and violates not only the Japan-Democratic People's Republic of Korea Pyongyang Declaration and the Joint Statement of the six-party talks but also Security Council resolution 1695 (2006) and the Council's presidential statement issued on 7 October of this year.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea's claimed nuclear test, together with its ballistic missile build-up, significantly changes the regional security environment. We have entered a new and more dangerous nuclear age. For that reason, Japan will address the issue in the First Committee as well as in the Security Council, together with the rest of the international community.

As a State Member of the United Nations, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is obliged faithfully to implement Security Council resolution 1695 (2006). Japan once again strongly demands that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea fully implement the Joint Statement of the six-party talks, in which the Democratic People's Republic of Korea committed itself to abandoning all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programmes and to returning at an early date to the NPT and International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards.

Lastly, let me quote the words of a surviving Hibaksha, or survivor of the atomic bombing in Hiroshima, who is now 79 years old. I have only a Japanese text; my translation may not be quite correct. She heard the news and lamented this development, saying, the leader of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea should please come to Hiroshima and learn about what happened. If he intends to use nuclear testing for its national prestige or for international political intentions, it is a very dangerous idea, and it may lead the whole of humankind to complete destruction.

**Mr. Kahiluoto** (Finland): I am speaking in my capacity as representative of the presidency of the European Union (EU).

Today the Finnish presidency of the European Union issued a statement on the carrying out of a nuclear test by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. In referring to the statement made by the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the situation today, I wish to read out this statement as a right of reply in this discussion.

> "The Presidency of the European Union strongly condemns the test of a nuclear explosive device by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Carrying out the test was unacceptable. The EU is working in close cooperation with the international community for a decisive international response to this provocative act.
>
> "Defying the Security Council statement of 6 October 2006 and the calls of the international community, this test profoundly jeopardizes regional stability and represents a severe threat to international peace and security. It is a flagrant breach of the December 1991 North-South Denuclearization Declaration. Furthermore, it conflicts completely with Security Council resolution 1695 (2006), unanimously adopted after the launch by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea of ballistic missiles, which underlined the need for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to show restraint and refrain from any action that might aggravate tension.
>
> "The presidency strongly urges the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to

announce immediately that it will refrain from any further tests of a nuclear device, publicly renounce nuclear weapons and return immediately and without preconditions to the six-party talks, and work towards implementation of the Joint Statement of September 2005, and, in particular, abandon all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programmes. The EU also urges the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to return to compliance with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards obligations. The EU further calls on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to sign and ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty."

This statement was issued last night, New York time, by the EU presidency, which is held by Finland.

**Mr. Dong-hee** (Republic of Korea): The Ambassador of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea stated this morning that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea was striving to achieve the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula. However, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea announced yesterday that it had conducted a nuclear test. I have requested the floor to express our deepest frustration and concern over the situation.

The Government of the Republic of Korea strongly condemns the actions of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Defying repeated warnings from the Government of the Republic of Korea and the international community, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has embarked on a path that poses a grave threat to peace and stability on the Korean peninsula and throughout North-East Asia.

This dashes the international community's hopes of resolving the North Korean nuclear issue and bringing about the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula peacefully, through dialogue. Through its actions, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has unilaterally breached and annulled the Joint Declaration on the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, which it signed with my Government in 1991.

The conduct of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea also constitutes a failure to meet its obligations under the Joint Statement of 19 September 2005, on which all parties to the six-party talks concurred, and is in outright defiance of Security Council resolution 1695 (2006) of 15 July. It is a provocative act that cannot be condoned or excused.

My delegation urges North Korea to abandon immediately all nuclear weapons and related programmes, to return to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) regime and to comply faithfully with international norms as a responsible member of the international community.

**Mr. MacKay** (New Zealand): I wish to refer to the statement made earlier this morning by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. In that statement, the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea suggested that those countries which intervened in the general debate asking the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to abandon its nuclear weapons programme were not motivated by a desire to arrive at a genuine and fair resolution of the nuclear issue. New Zealand was one of the countries that spoke in the general debate and addressed this issue, and the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea should have no doubt about the strength of New Zealand's views on the nuclear issue.

In that respect, we wish to deplore the claims made by the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea last night that it has conducted a nuclear test, which I note the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, rather strangely, did not refer to in his statement. If the claims by the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea are true, that action is unpardonable and inconsistent with the behaviour expected of a State seeking security and other guarantees from the global community.

New Zealand therefore joins others in condemning the actions of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. We absolutely reject the use of nuclear weapons and their testing. New Zealand is profoundly concerned by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's flagrant disregard for regional and international peace and security. Its decision to test a nuclear weapon makes a travesty of the spirit of nuclear disarmament and the non-proliferation regime and also of the global moratorium on nuclear testing that is in place pending the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

As New Zealand stated in the Committee's general debate last week when we addressed this issue,

committed dialogue, rather than military brinksmanship, provides the best possible course of action for achieving a peaceful and comprehensive resolution. We therefore urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to return to the six-party talks without preconditions, to act in accordance with Security Council resolution 1695 (2006), to work towards the expeditious implementation of the 19 September 2005 Joint Statement, and to refrain from further provocative actions of the sort announced last night.

**The Chairperson**: The general debate has now come to an end. On this occasion, I should like to offer a few personal observations on our debate.

I note that a large number of delegations participated in the debate. We have heard close to 100 statements — considerably more than in previous years — and the quality of the debate has, in my view, been impressively high. It is also commendable that delegations, by and large, have respected the guidelines for the debate with regard to time limits, presence in the Room at scheduled times, and so on. That augurs well for our efforts to improve the working methods of the Committee.

On a more substantive side, I have the following observations. Profound regret has been expressed over the lack of progress in the field of non-proliferation and disarmament, but delegations have, on the other hand, pledged a willingness to ensure a positive outcome of this session of the Committee.

I have noted that expectations are high for the upcoming Review of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). That is encouraging. I have also heard delegations express the hope that the Review Conference on the Biological (Toxin) Weapons Convention (BTWC) in December will move the biological weapons agenda forward. This should be appreciated by all.

Delegations are, not surprisingly, deeply concerned by nuclear proliferation threats. The call for nuclear disarmament is equally of no surprise to me, but the debate has focused not only on nuclear weapons — small arms and light weapons are causing unprecedented human suffering, and I sense that a call for control of the illicit trade in such weapons is consensual. The multilateral arms control machinery is in deep need of improvement. We can, and should, do better, since this is also seen to be a consensual sentiment.

We live in a time characterized by a deficit of mutual trust and confidence. This has certainly also been reflected in the general debate, but, as often happens here, there seems to exist common ground as well. It is my hope that this can be further developed during our thematic discussion, not least in our consultations on resolutions and decisions.

I wish representatives all the best in the upcoming deliberations.

In accordance with the Committee's programme of work and timetable, the First Committee will embark on the second phase of its work, namely, thematic discussion decision on item subjects and introduction and consideration of all draft resolutions submitted under all 'disarmament and international security agenda items, 82 to 97, starting this afternoon.

As I explained previously, there will be no formal list of speakers for the second phase of our work. I would, however, suggest that delegations inform the Secretariat of their plans to speak prior to the specific meeting. If not, request for all interventions will be taken directly from the floor on a given day. I would also urge all delegations to focus their comments on the specific subject that is being discussed at each meeting.

*The meeting rose at 12.35 p.m.*

United Nations A/C.1/61/PV.8

# General Assembly

Sixty-first session

*Official Records*

First Committee

8th meeting

Monday, 9 October 2006, 3 p.m.

New York

*Chairperson*: Mrs. Juul ..... (Norway)

*The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.*

**Agenda items 82 to 97 (*continued*)**

**Thematic discussion on item subjects, as well as the introduction and consideration of all draft resolutions submitted under all disarmament and international security agenda items**

**The Chairperson**: In accordance with the programme of work and our timetable the Committee will begin this afternoon the second phase of its work, namely the thematic discussion on item subjects, as well as the introduction and consideration of all draft resolutions submitted under all disarmament and related international security agenda items.

As already mentioned, there will be no formal list of speakers for the second stage of our work. I would, therefore, encourage delegations to inform the Secretariat of their plans to speak, prior to the specific meeting. If not, requests for all interventions will be taken directly from the floor on the given day.

As agreed, this afternoon the Committee will have an exchange with the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, the Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament, the Director-General of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the Executive Secretary of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) Preparatory Commission, on the current state of affairs in the field of arms control and disarmament and the roles of the respective organizations.

First, I will give the floor to the panellists to make their statements, and then delegations will have the opportunity to ask questions of them.

First, I will invite the Executive Secretary of the CTBTO Preparatory Commission, Mr. Tibor Tóth, to make his statement. As his travel schedule does not allow him to stay through the entire meeting, he will therefore begin.

**Mr. Tóth** (CTBTO): As Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization, it is a great honour for me to again have the opportunity to address the First Committee, and to provide a brief report about the status and activities of the Preparatory Commission. This year marks the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty by the General Assembly. Ten years into the life of the Preparatory Commission there is significant progress to report, both regarding universalization of the Treaty and its verifiability.

However, on the occasion of the tenth anniversary, we are also reminded of the serious challenges that remain. I share the deep concern and strong condemnation expressed, generated by today's announcement by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea that it had conducted a nuclear test. That occurred in spite of the strong appeals of the international community. Such action goes against the letter and the spirit of the treaties that I continue to hope the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will sign and ratify.

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

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The support demonstrated for the Treaty, which has been signed by 176 States and ratified by 135 States, highlights the commitment of the international community to establish a universal and verifiable Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

Since I reported to you last year, there has been significant progress in universalization, notwithstanding the challenges I just described to you. Ten more States have ratified the Treaty, bringing the number of ratifications to 135. Of the 44 so-called Annex 2 States, whose ratification is necessary for entry into force, 34 have already ratified. On 20 September, I attended the ministerial meeting of the Friends of the CTBT here in New York, co-hosted by Australia, Canada, Finland, Japan and the Netherlands. The meeting was well attended by representatives of 61 States, including 22 ministers and high-level officials. The joint ministerial statement, which was welcomed by the Secretary-General, reaffirmed full support for the objectives of the CTBT and the work of the Preparatory Commission.

Since 1997, the Preparatory Commission has been working to ensure that the CTBT verification regime is credible, functional and cost-effective. We are now entering a crucial phase in the building of the International Monitoring System. As of today, 72 per cent of the station network has been installed, and 54 per cent has been certified, meaning that the stations meet the stringent specifications of the Preparatory Commission. In the immediate future, the task of provisionally operating and maintaining the verification regime will become more important. Additional staffing and evaluation of the verification regime will be further proof that the CTBTO is equipped with a robust verification regime capable of detecting nuclear test explosions and all other nuclear explosions everywhere in the world as mandated in the Treaty. Data from the established stations are flowing via our global communications infrastructure to the International Data Centre in Vienna. At this nerve centre of the verification system, incoming data are collected, processed, analysed and transmitted to the States signatories for final analysis. Currently, 93 national data centres are in operation and receive Provisional Technical Secretariat data products. Another key element of the Treaty's verification regime being developed is on-site inspections. The purpose of conducting an on-site inspection is to determine whether a nuclear explosion has been carried out in violation of the Treaty and provide data for a final decision of the Executive Council. A well-prepared oversight regime should serve as the final verification tool, discouraging any potential violation of the Treaty, because of the high probability of exposure. The oversight regime has reached a point that will make it possible to conduct a major on-site exercise in 2008.

The CTBT verification regime empowers each State signatory to take a decision about ambiguous events and possibly request an on-site inspection based on the data and products provided by the CTBTO and its own national technical resources. In this respect, the CTBTO enables States, regardless of their size and wealth, to participate fully in the verification work and benefit from the wealth of data provided by the monitoring system for a variety of potentially important civil and scientific applications. During the past year, the Preparatory Commission has continued to discuss the potential contribution of the International Monitoring System data to the tsunami-warning system. I am confident that the upcoming meeting of the Preparatory Commission will approve provision by the Provisional Technical Secretariat to provide tsunami-warning organizations with relevant data on a continuous and real-time basis.

Let me conclude by stating that the building of a verification regime would be impossible without the political and financial commitment of States signatories, and without the expertise, talent and dedication of the experts working as delegates. While all of us involved in the work of the Preparatory Commission can be proud of the continuous progress that we collectively are making in building up the system, the past few days were a clear reminder of the political reality in which we operate. Ultimately, all our work — and, in particular the sophisticated verification regime — will show its worth only once the CTBT has entered into force. The States listed in Annex 2 of the CTBT, whose ratification is necessary for the entry into force must consider the value of the treaty for their national security and for international security. The reliable performance of the verification regime and the example of the growing number of States ratifying the Treaty should, I hope, help all the Annex 2 States to take a positive decision. It is my sincere hope that the current situation will further highlight the importance of the Treaty and will lead to an even stronger effort to ensure its early entry into force.

*The meeting was suspended at 3.15 p.m. and resumed at 3.20 p.m.*

**The Chairperson**: I now invite the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, Mr. Nabuaki Tanaka, to make a statement to the Committee.

**Mr. Tanaka** (Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs): We meet today in a grim world with a range of challenges, old and new. Unfortunately, today we are quite disturbed and concerned by the news that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has conducted a nuclear test. The Secretary-General expressed his deep concern that this action violates international disarmament and non-proliferation norms as well as the current international moratorium on nuclear testing. This international scene seems to have been covered by my initial intervention, so today I shall focus on what the United Nations system is doing to address these questions.

The system in which all of us are currently involved was established by nations of the world to serve their common security interests. Specific issues relating to weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) are the focus of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) Preparatory Commission. Other efforts are also under way, for example, to control the trade in sensitive technologies or materials needed to make or deliver such weapons.

While there is not yet any global treaty regulating the trade in conventional arms, efforts are under way to strengthen cooperation among States and organizations that seek to curb the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, to eliminate landmines and to prohibit certain weapons that States regard as inhumane.

Some of these controls can be advanced through unilateral, bilateral, plurilateral or regional initiatives. Yet, when the goal is to achieve a solution to a problem that is truly global in scope, none of these initiatives will suffice. Something else is needed — something global, something multilateral, something with legitimacy and legal authority.

To deal with such problems, the system has led to the development of a group of focused, intergovernmental organizations. The need for such organizations arises out of the global scope of the problems posed by certain weapons systems, as well as the political or technical complexity of regulating or eliminating such weapons. No single State, group of States or organization can solve all of these problems while acting alone.

Two such institutions are represented here on this panel today — the OPCW and the CTBTO — and they are different in many ways. Yet, they also have a lot in common. Together, they contribute to strengthening the rule of law with respect to nuclear and chemical weapons.

The global effort to promote disarmament, however, requires something more than an archipelago of intergovernmental organizations; and this is where the United Nations has been able to make its best contributions. It has many functions, but one of the most important is to promote synergy — that is, to help States and other intergovernmental organizations to solve challenges as effectively as possible, on a global scale, by minimizing duplication of effort, improving information sharing and reinforcing the basic legitimacy of collective action to address such threats. Historically, the United Nations has provided a solid foundation of diplomatic support for the conclusion of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). Both were negotiated at the Conference on Disarmament and endorsed by the General Assembly. The United Nations also facilitated the negotiation of many other key multilateral treaties.

In the Secretariat, the Department for Disarmament Affairs continues to serve as a common partner for numerous intergovernmental organizations working in this field and has been working to strengthen cooperation. For example, the Department for Disarmament Affairs is helping States and a wide variety of organizations to grapple with problems created by the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. Our assistance is apparent in the administrative and substantive support we provide at international meetings and multilateral negotiations, such as the latest Review Conference on the Programme of Action on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, the Open-ended Working Group on marking and tracing, as well as in several regional and subregional initiatives undertaken by our three United Nations regional centres.

Much of this work has a cross-cutting impact and fosters synergy among many other activities of the

United Nations, in such fields as development and humanitarian assistance and in addressing the special concerns of women and children. To ensure that the work of the United Nations in this field is both multidisciplinary and coherent, the Secretary-General in 1998 designated the Department for Disarmament Affairs as the focal point for coordinating all actions on small arms and light weapons within the United Nations system. The internal United Nations mechanism to achieve this goal is called Coordinating Action on Small Arms (CASA), which includes representatives from 16 intergovernmental organizations in the United Nations system. I encourage your support for this mechanism, which can be instrumental in improving the quality and coordination of United Nations assistance to Member States. Together, these efforts have produced some impressive concrete results. For example, it has destroyed some 570,000 small arms and 70 tons of explosives in Latin American regions. As public awareness grows over the economic, social and security implications from the illicit trade in such items, the demand for such projects will continue to grow.

The Department for Disarmament Affairs maintains the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and promotes usage of the United Nations standardized [1] instrument for reporting military expenditures. In the area of landmines, the Geneva branch of the Department for Disarmament Affairs services key meetings of the parties to the Ottawa Convention on Landmines and cooperates closely with the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining. The Geneva branch, led by my colleague, Mr. Ordzhonikidze, who is in attendance here now, similarly assists parties to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons in pursuing the elimination of the inhumane weapons covered by that Convention. Mr. Ordzhonikidze also serves as the Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament.

In the nuclear field, we work closely with the IAEA to promote, through workshops, seminars, and official statements, non-proliferation and safeguards objectives, including encouragement of States to sign and ratify the Additional Protocol. We provide substantive and administrative support to the five-year Review Conferences of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and the sessions of its Preparatory Committees.

We also promote nuclear-weapon-free zones. The recent signing of a treaty creating a Central Asian nuclear-weapon-free zone marks a critical step in the evolution of these zones. It marks the first such zone to be created entirely north of the Equator, covering large areas where many nuclear weapons were once deployed. Our role in promoting such zones is guided both by the 1999 guidelines adopted by the United Nations Disarmament Commission and by mandates that we are given by States. The next step forward will be for the States in this zone to enter into meaningful negotiations with the nuclear-weapon States to achieve their commitment to the necessary security assurances. I am glad to see that the process is under way with the five Central Asian States taking an initiative for such consultations. The Department for Disarmament Affairs is prepared to assist in any way to achieve this goal, in accordance with the mandates we have been given.

In the framework of the Secretary-General's efforts to strengthen cooperation with regional and intergovernmental organizations, the Department for Disarmament Affairs leads the Working Group on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation within the United Nations system. Its recommendations on ways to improve cooperation and coordination were recently approved by the Secretary-General's seventh High-Level Meeting with the heads of regional and other intergovernmental organizations, held last month.

Today's world is encountering new challenges that the founders of the United Nations did not envisage at the inception of the Organization. Given the increasing examples of nuclear non-compliance and aberrations from the NPT regime and norms that have taken place in recent years, I would foresee an even closer relationship between the Security Council and the IAEA in terms of consultations and information sharing, because the Security Council is the only mechanism mandated to determine the existence of a threat to peace, a breach of peace or an act of aggression. This should be done, in cases involving WMDs, only with the technical advice of the relevant organizations. Unfortunately, we have not had a mechanism to carry out such consultations in the past among agencies and organizations concerned with disarmament and non-proliferation. Even between the First Committee and the Conference on Disarmament there is only a superficial relationship.

It is true that not every security problem requires a solution based at the United Nations. The problem of anti-personnel landmines is often cited as an example of how arms control can advance through agreements

reached outside the United Nations. Strategic nuclear arms control has proceeded on such a basis for years, as have several regional security initiatives.

Yet, when such problems are truly global in scope, the case for a coordinated global response becomes all the more compelling, and no organization is better positioned to address such problems on a planetary scale than the United Nations. It has a universal membership; it has a common Charter that is binding upon all its Members; and it provides the indispensable common ground for deliberating the many problems of international peace and security. When its Member States unite, the United Nations becomes the world's largest and potentially most effective coalition of the willing. It is this quality that gives the United Nations its continuing relevance in addressing our gravest security threats and in building a better future for all.

**The Chairperson**: I now give the floor to Mr. Sergei Ordzhonikidze, Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament.

**Mr. Ordzhonikidze** (Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament): This is the first time, I believe, that we have tried to organize such an interactive dialogue and I would like to thank you, Madam Chair, and the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs. Maybe this dialogue will be helpful to the Conference on Disarmament, as some of our colleagues from the First Committee — with which the Under-Secretary-General said a much closer relationship should be cultivated — might be able to help us enlarge our thinking. There is obviously not enough imagination in the Conference to resolve the issue of our current deadlock. I would like to emphasize that finding solutions to the problems in the Conference on Disarmament requires a sort of circuit breaker.

There are growing doubts as to whether the Conference can survive another year without a solution. At a minimum, I have such doubts and would like to express them to the First Committee in order to come up with different ideas or perhaps to provoke the Committee to prove me wrong. It must be taken into consideration that the Five Ambassadors' proposal and similar comprehensive and balanced proposals will hardly enjoy consensus. Stand-alone negotiations on the fissile material agreement within the Conference are, therefore, not an option either. It would not be surprising if an initiative emerged to consider moving the fissile material negotiations away from the Conference on Disarmament, and maybe even some other problems on the Conference's agenda as well. Other organs might be more helpful in that area. Of course, nothing will happen unless there is a consensus. By the same token, one can wonder, given the existence of the consensus rule, why the reluctant members are not even willing to commence negotiations, when they have the capacity and indeed the right to protect their national positions if there are prospects of a compromise.

Incidentally, the Blix Commission recommended that the Conference should be able to adopt its programme of work by a two-thirds majority of members present and voting. Maybe we should think about that as well.

In assessing other possible ways forward, certain things are quite clear. First, the prospects for changing the rules of procedure to make it easier for the Conference to break its deadlock are slight at best. It is a very difficult problem and I don't think that we will be able, frankly speaking, to solve that issue. To me, it looks like a non-option. There is very little appetite for yet another plenary debate on the issues. A qualitative increase in engagement on substantive matters will be required in order to avoid permanent disillusionment with the Conference on Disarmament amongst its members. As noted already, the Five Ambassadors' proposal, although widely supported, will never, in my view, attract a consensus. How should we proceed?

New proposals de-emphasizing linkages among the four core issues have not yet gained any traction. As you all know, I am very much in favour of those kinds of proposals.

There is a growing acceptance that it may be possible to delink the core issues through the understanding that the fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT) will be negotiated in tandem with some form of lesser treatment of all or some of the other three core issues. The FMCT is particularly relevant now, taking into account, as mentioned by the Under-Secretary-General, the dramatic news today of the testing of a nuclear weapon by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Next, a parallel process needs to be set up. Of course, it will be complicated, given the need for decisions on the process, i.e. the preparation of

subsidiary bodies and the selection of chairs for any such bodies. Alternatives might be, as I have always said, to take up the issues at plenary meetings. It is not important that it be a working group meeting or a plenary meeting. The important thing is that we have to at least open article I of the main core issues and we have to start with the FMCT, taking into account the recent political developments.

Member States wishing to play an active role in helping the Conference to overcome its impasse could consider several possible avenues.

First, countries that remain most enamoured of the Five Ambassadors' proposal should realize that continued stultification of the Conference's work may well lead to its demise and the pursuit of the security agenda through other avenues — over which we at the Conference would have little or no control at all — such as the Security Council or other organs of the United Nations.

Secondly, exploring an idea that has been mentioned from time to time by some Member States on previous occasions in the Conference on Disarmament, the Conference could establish a group of scientific experts to prepare the ground for negotiations on, for example, the FMCT.

Thirdly, one could encourage the incoming President of South Africa to consider taking a bold approach, based on the 10 available meetings per week of the Conference on Disarmament, whereby there would be a preponderance of sessions devoted to the FMCT. However, there would also be scope for consideration of the other core issues, as well as some time allocated to general business, including any new or additional issues. Such a schedule would need to be calibrated in such a way as to not give rise to overwhelming demands on resources, especially for small delegations.

Members might ask questions about the resourcing of the Conference on Disarmament, if we intensify our meetings, and perhaps even on the availability of the Council Chamber in the Palais for next year's session. But members may also comment that the first thing is for the Conference on Disarmament to get down to its substantive work as soon as possible. As soon as it does, the necessary resources should quickly mobilize — at least those that depend on the Office of the Director-General of the United Nations in Geneva. I promise, as I did before, to give the Committee all the necessary resources within my power.

Actually, I probably cannot convince members politically and I come back to the problems of scheduling meetings and resourcing. I will try to be a little more inventive and not to only address tiresome political arguments. Since we have an audience here that is larger than our Conference on Disarmament audience, there may be some other delegations that could contribute to our interesting discussions on the issue.

**The Chairperson**: I give the floor to Mr. Rogelio Pfirter, Director-General of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons.

**Mr. Pfirter** (Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons): Allow me first, to begin by expressing my gratitude to you, Madam Chair, for having provided this opportunity. I am also delighted to share the podium with the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs and the Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament. Mr. Tanaka expressed some ideas that I would echo, including those concerning cooperation between different organizations.

Above all, it gives me great pleasure to address the First Committee once again. This Committee plays such a pivotal role in guiding the international disarmament agenda and is crucially linked to the achievements of recognized milestones in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation.

Although my organization is totally independent from the United Nations, we believe it is proper and incumbent upon us to come here and pay tribute to the work of the Committee and to provide as much information as we can. I apologize in advance, if my report is a bit extensive. But, I think members of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) would expect me to provide such a comprehensive view to your Committee.

The tenth anniversary of the entry into force of the Chemical Weapons Convention and the creation of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons will fall on 29 April 2007. Within a relatively short time span and despite the ebb and flow we have seen in the wider field of disarmament and non-proliferation, the Chemical Weapons Convention has been accepted more and more broadly by the international community as a credible and unique

instrument for the destruction and future non-proliferation of a whole category of weapons of mass destruction. It is being effectively implemented, in particular its disarmament agenda, and the OPCW has emerged as a solid institution that is carrying out its mandate with determination.

We remain steadfast in our goal of completely ridding the planet of chemical weapons. Our membership has been increasing steadily and has recently reached the impressive figure of 180 States parties.

While it is natural to take some satisfaction from such achievements, we are nevertheless fully conscious of the many significant challenges that lie ahead. There remain a small number of countries that have yet to join the Convention. They number only 15 and we know that some of them are effectively moving towards joining us. However, a few others appear to be putting off joining the Convention almost indefinitely. The latter group of States are players in well-known sensitive regions of the world. The fact remains, however, that it is precisely in areas of conflict that we need, in the interest of peace and security, to insure complete chemical disarmament in accordance with the spirit and provisions of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

I will say more about universality later in my statement. At this stage, let me mention the equally indispensable need to secure the effective implementation, in full and on time by all States party to the Convention, of their obligations under it.

With that point in mind, I would like to offer a brief overview of current developments in the area of chemical disarmament or destruction of weapons and non-proliferation. The framers of the Convention set States parties in possession of chemical weapons the ambitious task of destroying over 71,000 metric tons of chemical warfare agents and nearly 9 million munitions by the year 2012 at the latest. Eliminating that huge stockpile of extremely toxic and dangerous substances, while ensuring that neither people nor the environment are harmed, was always going to be a daunting challenge for the States parties.

The destruction of more than 14,700 metric tons of chemical warfare agents in six possessor States has been verified, and that represents over 20 per cent of the total declared stockpile in the world. Similarly, the destruction of 2.6 million munitions and containers, more than one-quarter of the declared stockpile, has been verified by OPCW inspection teams.

While those figures are a sign of steady progress, it is just as clear that the majority of the world's stockpile of chemical weapons has yet to be destroyed. Five possessor States parties have requested extensions of final destruction deadlines to dates beyond 2007, with plans to eliminate their declared chemical weapons stockpiles before April 2012, which is the final — I would say sacrosanct — deadline set by the Convention.

The lion's share of resources and inspection time is devoted to the destruction campaigns in the two largest possessor States — the Russian Federation and the United States of America, which have declared the largest stockpiles. In the Russian Federation, the chemical weapons destruction programme is gaining the necessary momentum. Operations at the destruction facility in Gorny were completed in December 2005. Two new facilities in Kambarka and Maradykovsky became operational in December 2005 and August 2006, respectively. The Russian Federation plans to begin destroying chemical weapons at three other chemical weapons destruction facilities, located in Leonidovka, Pochep and Shchuchye in 2008.

A fourth facility in Kizner, which is to be the last to be constructed, will be operational in 2009. The whole Russian chemical weapons stockpile, comprising more than 39,000 metric tons of blister and organophosphorous agents, is thus scheduled for destruction by April 2012. Those plans reinforce the assurance of the Government of the Russian Federation of its resolve to accelerate the pace of construction and to meet its solemn obligations under the Convention to do so. I commend both the Russian effort and the commitment underlying it. Such positive signs are most welcome, since until recently the slow pace at which the Russian Federation's large stockpile was being destroyed caused understandable concern. On the same subject, I applaud the assistance of the Group of Eight countries and other donor States to support the destruction programme of the Russian Federation and I hope that vital cooperation will continue and will be further reinforced in the future.

In the United States of America, nine destruction facilities are currently operational, and more than 36 per cent of that country's stockpile has been destroyed to date. These figures make abundantly clear the commitment of the United States to comply with its obligations under the Convention, which is vitally important for the achievement of the Convention's

object and purpose. Scepticism and concern are sometimes expressed about whether chemical weapons can, in fact, be eliminated as the Convention foresees and requires, namely, in time and in good form. I continue to remain positive and optimistic on this matter because, as members of the Committee undoubtedly know, there is a strong political commitment by the major possessor States to achieve that goal.

Two conditions are essential in order for efforts in this vital area to be sustained. There must be, first, an unwavering political will, and secondly, assuming that there is such political will, specific plans for the destruction of chemical weapons stockpiles. I will continue to urge all States parties to approach this matter in a constructive spirit and to support Governments in their efforts to achieve the targets concerned.

There are some important milestones that indicate that we are on track. In addition to the chemical weapons stockpiles, all 65 former chemical weapons production facilities declared by 12 States parties have been permanently de-activated. The destruction or conversion for legitimate purposes of over 87 per cent of those facilities has already been certified by OPCW inspectors and the remainder of them is expected to be destroyed by the end of 2007 or converted by the end of 2008.

A good example of this beating of swords into ploughshares is the conversion by the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya of its former chemical weapons production facility in Rabta, which will be devoted to produce to low-cost vaccines and medicines for the African continent. The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya's chemical weapons stockpile is now expected to be destroyed by the year 2011, following its request for extensions of its intermediate and final destruction deadlines.

By November 2003, and ahead of schedule, India had achieved the destruction of 45 per cent of its stockpile. Chemical weapons are now being destroyed at India's second destruction facility. According to India's request for an extension of its final destruction deadline, all of its stockpiles will be eliminated by 28 April 2009, for which I commend India. In this case, another State party continues to move steadily towards fulfilment of its obligation to eliminate its chemical weapons stockpiles.

Finally, Albania is also moving forward and we expect it to be able to start disposing of its declared stockpile no later than November of this year. Albania recently requested the extension of its intermediate destruction deadlines but all declared chemical weapons will be destroyed, according to Albania's plan, by the end of April 2007.

We must persevere in upholding the provisions of the Chemical Weapons Convention that cover disarmament. But there are also other pressing priorities that need to be addressed. The Convention contains provisions and obligations that, if effectively implemented, will go a long way towards addressing the international community's heightened concerns about proliferation and possible terrorist acts perpetrated through the use of chemical weapons.

Lax controls over the trade in or manufacture or sale of toxic chemicals could not only lead to the proliferation of such chemicals but also heighten the risk of chemical terrorism, especially since the knowledge and skills needed to produce rudimentary types of chemical weapons are not difficult to acquire.

The Convention now covers over 98 per cent of the worldwide chemical industry relevant to it and over 90 per cent of the world's population. Over 2,500 inspections have been completed by OPCW inspection teams at more than 946 sites in 76 States parties. While the majority of such inspections have been conducted at production, storage and destruction facilities relating to chemical weapons, we have also completed over 1,100 industry inspections and we will continue to increase as needed the number of industrial inspections that will be conducted each year.

With the support and cooperation of our member States and, indeed, of the world's chemical industry, whose valuable endorsement for the Convention I would like to acknowledge, the non-proliferation and confidence-building regime of the Convention has gained global acceptance. However, we have to ensure that every State party to the CWC establishes the administrative and legislative measures to detect, pursue and prosecute any breach of the Convention by its nationals in its territory. Recognizing this imperative, the first Review Conference of the Chemical Weapons Convention, held in 2003, adopted an action plan to encourage all States parties, especially those that have fallen short in meeting their national implementation obligations, to take the steps necessary to meet their obligations under the Convention regarding this issue.

The Conference of the States Parties to the Convention at its tenth session, held last year, acknowledged the significant results achieved by States parties in implementing their obligations. There is an increasing number of States parties that are in the process of enacting the necessary legislation, including penal law provisions, or of adopting administrative measures.

The number of States parties that have enacted comprehensive legislation has increased from approximately 50 in October 2003 to 68 by the end of September 2006. In addition, 110 States parties have informed the secretariat of the legislative and administrative measures they have adopted. Of these, 93 have submitted the text of their implementing legislation. At the same time, the number of States parties that have designated or established a national authority had increased by the end of September 2006, from 126 to 168, or 94 per cent of all States parties. This is a very positive development.

Although these figures represent satisfactory progress in the implementation of the Plan of Action, clearly more must be done to ensure that the key provisions of the Convention, which require systematic declarations in the team monitoring, control and transfer of chemicals, and regulatory measures to identify and track chemicals of concern, are in place in each and every State party.

In the last few years, over 130 States parties to the Convention have requested and received from the secretariat and several States parties the support they have needed to establish their own capacity to apply the chemical weapons ban nationally. This year, again, the Conference will closely examine the status of the implementation of the Convention globally and will make appropriate recommendations if necessary.

It is evident that more needs to be done by a considerable number of States in order to fully implement the Convention in their territories. I urge those States to do so in the belief that full implementation by all member States is indispensable for the ultimate success of the Convention. The OPCW remains ready to actively support them in their endeavours to that end.

The United Nations has encouraged a similar approach with regard to the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004). Our outreach activities and a substantial programme of assistance have contributed to the endeavours of many States parties in closing the gap between joining the Convention and implementing it. We are glad to add a new chapter to our ongoing collaboration with the United Nations, especially its Department for Disarmament Affairs in the context of its own outreach activities that are connected to the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004). I wish to assure Committee members that, through various forums organized by the United Nations in different regions of the world, the OPCW will continue to make active contributions by sharing its experience and its expertise with States Members of the United Nations with a view to advancing our common objectives.

Further efforts are being undertaken with the OPCW in the implementation of articles X and XI, which cover international cooperation and assistance. These are areas of particular interest to many member States whose economies are developing or are in transition. Contemporary security defects, including the possibility of the use of chemical weapons by non-State actors, have created a renewed interest in the ability of the OPCW to coordinate the delivery of emergency assistance to States parties in case of an attack or a threat of an attack by chemical weapons. Last year, we conducted a major field exercise, together with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in the Ukraine, as well as with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)'s Disaster Relief Coordination Centre.

The OPCW and the United Nations enjoy fruitful cooperation in a number of areas, based on the Relationship Agreement between them. I believe that even more fruitful consequences can be expected, in view of the remarks by the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, remarks that I fully endorse. Links and cooperation in this sense are, as I said, growing, as is confidence that our collaboration will enable us to fulfil the expectations of Member States, as expressed in the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy adopted by the General Assembly in September 2006. This important strategy encourages the OPCW to continue to help build country capacity to prevent terrorists from accessing chemical materials, to ensure security of chemical and related facilities and to respond effectively in the event of an attack with such materials.

Allow me to recall once more that universal adherence to the Convention is an objective that is

fundamental to the goals of strengthening the global ban on chemical weapons and ensuring that the prohibition is accepted globally. We have seen enormous growth in that sense. There were 40 States not party to the Convention in 2003, when the universality action plan was adopted. Today there remain only 15. We warmly welcome the new accessions and ratifications.

By choosing to join the Convention, these new States parties have made a critical contribution to advancing the goals of disarmament and non-proliferation. Indeed, as I mentioned at the beginning of my statement, membership today stands at 180 countries. Of these, six have joined the Convention since I last addressed the Committee. They include Djibouti, Haiti, Liberia, the Comoros and — most recently — the Central African Republic, for which the Convention will enter into force on 20 October. For its part, Iraq has informed us that it is taking steps to accede to the Convention in the near future. We welcome the recent decision by the Council of Ministers of Iraq to recommend their country's accession to the Convention. We plan to build on our recent fruitful cooperation, which includes training opportunities for Iraqi officials, and we will continue to extend all possible assistance to help Iraq follow through on its decision to join the Convention.

On the other hand, despite the high level of participation in the Convention in all regions of the world, there is a gap — I have already referred to the 15 countries. Several of those that have not yet joined us have cited logistical or resource constraints as the cause of their delay in joining. Others have assured us that they are in the process of preparing to accede or ratify. The real concerns, however, lie elsewhere. There is an apparent lack of political will to join a treaty that conforms to the disarmament ideals of the international community in terms of its non-discriminatory character and its strong verification system.

A significant part of the Middle East represents a serious void in our map, since neither Egypt nor Israel, neither Lebanon nor Syria, has yet joined the Convention, even though, as is well known, Israel has signed it.

A similar situation exists in North-East Asia, where the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is still not a State party. I regret to say that North Korea is the only Member of the United Nations that has not responded at all to any of our initiatives for contact and dialogue. When I consider this in the context of the news that has shocked the world today — that is, the claim by North Korea that it has conducted a nuclear test — I can only join others in expressing serious concern and condemnation regarding the security situation on the Korean peninsula.

The only other State in Asia that is not a party is Myanmar, which is, however, an original signatory to the Convention. By signing, it has indicated its political decision to respect the provisions of the Convention. We have intensified our interaction with Myanmar with a view to encouraging its ratification at the earliest opportunity. In that regard, when it joins, it will join not just the rest of the international community but, very specifically, its fellow countries in the Association of South-East Asian Nations, which is second to none in support of our Convention.

In the context of our broader approach to promoting the universality of the Chemical Weapons Convention, we are looking forward to a key event that will take place in the coming weeks. Our third workshop on the universality of the Convention in the Mediterranean basin and the Middle East will take place in Rome later this month, with the sponsorship and co-financing of the European Union and the strong support of the Italian Government, to both of which we would like to extend our gratitude. The meeting will follow earlier gatherings in Malta and Cyprus in 2004 and 2005, and will hopefully build up the fruitful exchanges that took place on both of those occasions.

I am grateful to the foreign ministers of Israel, Lebanon and Syria, each of whom has responded positively to my invitation by nominating an official delegation to participate in the event. This will allow each of those States not party to the Convention to take part in a candid, forward-looking dialogue that will have as a key aim their eventual adherence to the Convention. I also hope that we will be able to build on our positive contacts with Egypt, which, although it has not yet informed us that it will be going to Rome, has, however, been a key country, as we know, in the process that led to the Chemical Weapons Convention. We look forward to its participation in such events, since that would only add to their value and promote fruitful dialogue.

In short, I once again appeal to all remaining non-parties in the Middle East to seriously consider

joining the Convention at an early date. Surely, taking that step would give significant impetus to advancing the aspirations of peace and security in the region.

Finally, I also appeal to the remaining States non-parties in Africa and the Caribbean. We hope that the few remaining States in Africa will soon join the rest of the continent in support of the Convention. I want to praise Africa for its strong endorsement of the Chemical Weapons Convention. In this context, I would encourage Congo, which presides over the African Union and is a member of the Security Council, but is not yet a member of the Chemical Weapons Convention, to take a leadership role in joining the Convention.

In the Caribbean subregion, despite the relevant decisions of the Organization of American States, which has formally called for the establishment of biological- and chemical-weapon-free zones in Latin America and for all countries to join the Chemical Weapons Convention, there are still three countries that are not yet States parties. Their non-participation is becoming increasingly difficult to understand. Those three countries must surely understand that, at this late stage, their absence and their seeming indifference, even if not inspired by any fundamental disagreement with the object and purpose of the Convention, in fact undermine it, and therefore put them increasingly at odds with the best interests of the international community. I therefore urge the Bahamas, Barbados and the Dominican Republic to take urgent and concrete steps to join the Convention. They are the only three countries in the whole of the Americas that are still not members of our Convention.

With apologies for the length of my statement, I would like to conclude by saying that we continue to make steady gains in implementing the programme priorities of the Convention. Gains are reflected in the sustained progress that we have made in ensuring a credible and transparent regime to both verify the destruction of chemical weapons and prevent their re-emergence; in consolidating our efforts to prepare for situations that might require the coordination of protection and assistance to Member States; in promoting international cooperation in the peaceful uses of chemistry; and, finally, in promoting universal adherence to the Convention.

Finally, I join the rest of the international community in expressing profound satisfaction about the recommendation made earlier today by acclamation by the Security Council that the Foreign Minister of the Republic of Korea, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, be the next Secretary-General of the Organization. During his tenure as Foreign Minister of his country, he has not only proved a statesman of note, but has also made a specific contribution to the management of the Chemical Weapons Convention. We look forward to continuing our cooperation between the United Nations and my organization during his leadership of this important body.

**The Chairperson**: It is my intention now to provide the Committee with the opportunity to have an interactive discussion with our panellists by holding an informal question and answer session.

*The meeting was suspended at 4.10 p.m. and resumed at 5.10 p.m.*

**The Chairperson**: There has been one more request for the floor in exercise of the right of reply in response to this morning's meeting. Although we concluded the general debate at the end of that meeting, it is my intention, with your concurrence, to give the floor now to the representative of the Russian Federation.

**Mr. Vasiliev** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): My delegation would like to exercise its right of reply in connection with the statement made by the representative of Georgia at this morning's meeting.

We deeply regret the statement that was made. Once again, the Georgians have made use of an international forum, more specifically the First Committee of the General Assembly, for their own purposes of propaganda in considering various aspects of Georgian-Russian relations, including the matter of military bases. That is not on our agenda.

In general I would like to state that Russia is fully compliant with the bilateral agreement established in 1999 in Istanbul and the Joint Statement of the Russian Federation and Georgia in annex 14 to the Final Act of the Conference of States Parties to the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe.

Moreover, on 31 March 2006, Russia and Georgia signed an agreement on a timeframe for temporary functioning followed by the withdrawal of Russian military bases and other military facilities in the trans-Caucasian region. Under that agreement, Georgia undertook to ensure security for the withdrawal of the

Russian bases and organizing the transport of the equipment involved.

Again, I am obliged to mention, with regret, that instead of creating normal conditions for the withdrawal of the Russian military technology, Georgia has been creating some kind of hysteria, as can be seen, inter alia, by the recent seizure of four Russian officers.

The statement of the Georgian representative also touched on the question of the situation concerning Abkhazia and Ossetia. Once again, we regret that the propaganda campaign being indulged in by Georgia is being carried out against a backdrop of seeking a military solution to the conflicts in Abkhazia and Ossetia.

There has been a build-up of military presence in the Kadori Valley, which is a violation of the Moscow agreement on ceasefire and separation of forces that was signed in 2004. The recent report of the Secretary-General bears witness to that in describing the situation between Abkhazia and Georgia.

The Georgian representative also raised the matter of a Russian military base in Gudauta. In mid-2001, Russia officially declared and officially notified members of the Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe that the base had been closed and the land was being used by peacekeeping forces of the Commonwealth of Independent States, which were carrying out peacekeeping activities in the area of the conflict between Georgia and Abkhazia.

In 2002, an Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) monitoring group visited the base and confirmed that it had in fact been closed. Russia intends to comply with its obligations on the withdrawal of Russian military equipment from Georgia, despite the anti-Russian campaign that has been waged recently. Just a few days ago, Mr. Vladimir Putin, the President of Russia, confirmed that. This year, we removed 45 per cent of our military equipment from the Russian military bases at Batumi and Akhalkalaki, 19 trains through the territory of Azerbaijan and six trains through the territory of Armenia.

The statement by the representative of Georgia also touched on the uncontrolled delivery of weapons to the region. We can confirm that but, unfortunately, that proliferation of weapons is related to the unprecedented military build-up by Georgia itself. Thus, it is our hope that other States, including non-regional States, will help to promote the normalization of the situation in the region and not allow the delivery of destabilizing weapons into Georgia.

**The Chairperson**: Before adjourning today's meeting, I should like to remind all delegations that the deadline for the submission of draft resolutions is this Wednesday, 11 October 2006, at 6 p.m. Delegations are urged to adhere to that deadline so that the Secretariat can process the documents in a timely manner. I strongly appeal to delegations not to wait until the last minute to submit their draft resolutions. By complying with that request, they will greatly assist in the speedy processing of the documents and help to minimize the possibility of error.

In that connection, I should also like to remind delegations that, in accordance with paragraph 28 of document A/61/250, the submitters are responsible for ensuring that the electronic and paper versions of the draft resolutions and decisions are identical in content.

I am aware that a number of delegations already submitted their draft resolutions last week. I should like to express my deep appreciation to those delegations for their early submission and to encourage others to follow suit.

*The meeting rose at 5.20 p.m.*

United Nations A/C.1/61/PV.9

# General Assembly

Sixty-first session

*Official Records*

First Committee

**9**th meeting

Tuesday, 10 October 2006, 10 a.m.

New York

*Chairperson:* Mrs. Juul ..... (Norway)

*The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.*

**Agenda items 82 to 97 (*continued*)**

**Thematic discussion on item subjects and introduction and consideration of all draft resolutions submitted under all disarmament and international security agenda items**

**The Chairperson**: We shall now begin our thematic discussion on the issue of nuclear weapons. As we have no guest speakers today, I shall give the floor to delegations wishing to make an intervention on the specific subject under consideration.

**Mr. Kahiluoto** (Finland): I speak on behalf of the European Union. The acceding countries Bulgaria and Romania, the candidate countries Turkey, Croatia and The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the countries of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidates — Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia — and the European Free Trade Association country, Iceland, member of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine and Moldova, align themselves with this statement.

Last year we expressed our considerable disappointment at the lack of non-proliferation and disarmament language in the World Summit Outcome Document. The EU also regrets that last year's Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons was unable to agree on a substantive final document to address the most pressing challenges to the Treaty. However, we reiterate our support for a universal non-proliferation regime, supported by a strong system of international safeguards and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

The EU believes that the prevention of nuclear proliferation and the pursuit of nuclear disarmament in accordance with article VI of the NPT are essential for global peace and security. The NPT is the cornerstone of that regime, based on three mutually reinforcing pillars: non-proliferation, disarmament and the peaceful use of nuclear energy. We believe it is as important today as it was when first agreed, 35 years ago. The European Union will continue to preserve the integrity of the NPT in promoting all the objectives laid down in the Treaty in a structured and balanced manner, as identified and recorded in the EU Common Position that we adopted prior to the Review Conference, on 25 April 2005.

The European Union continues to support the decisions and resolution adopted at the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference, as well as the Final Document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference, and will bear in mind the current situation. We note also that the final report, which includes the programme of work, adopted by consensus at the 2005 NPT Review Conference, constitutes a reference for the future review process, in which the EU will engage. The EU stands by its Common Position agreed on 25 April 2005 relating to the NPT Review Conference. We also continue to work towards universal accession to the

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NPT, and call on those States not yet party to it to accede to the Treaty as non-nuclear-weapon States.

The European Union looks forward to the first Preparatory Committee meeting for the next NPT Review Conference; that meeting, next year, should take place in Vienna. We are committed to contributing actively to its successful outcome. In our view, the next NPT review cycle will have to produce tangible results that build on all three pillars of the NPT in order to reinforce the regime.

The EU is guided by its commitment to uphold, implement and strengthen the multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation treaties and agreements. Meeting the challenge of the risks associated with proliferation is a key element in the EU's external relations. The EU strategy against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction commits the Union to act with resolve, using all instruments and policies at its disposal, to prevent, deter, halt and, where possible, eliminate proliferation programmes of concern worldwide. We are also committed to implementing our Common Position of 17 November 2003 on the universalization and reinforcement of multilateral agreements in the field of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery.

In this year of the fiftieth anniversary of the adoption of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Statute, the EU reaffirms its full support for the work of that unique and indispensable organization, which pursues the same objectives as we do. The IAEA is the world's focal point for peaceful nuclear cooperation and nuclear safety, and it has an indispensable, global role in preventing the spread of nuclear weapons and countering new threats of nuclear terrorism. The three pillars of the IAEA Statute — verification, safety and technology — have been strengthened where necessary, and remain solid in the face of their respective challenges.

The European Union considers the universal adoption and implementation of comprehensive safeguards agreements, and additional protocols to them, a prerequisite for an effective and credible safeguards system. Together, the IAEA comprehensive safeguards agreements and the additional protocol constitute the current IAEA verification standard. We strongly support strengthening of the IAEA's safeguards. We consider adherence to them an essential means of verifying fulfilment of States parties' obligations under article III of the NPT.

Additional protocols have been in force in all EU member States since May 2004. We urge all States that have not yet done so to sign an additional protocol without further delay. We also urge all States that have signed, but not yet brought into force, their respective safeguards agreements and additional protocols, to do so without further delay. We believe that the universalization of the additional protocols would strengthen the international non-proliferation regime and contribute to the security of all States. In addition, it would greatly increase the confidence necessary for international cooperation in the exclusively peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

The EU's support for the IAEA extends to very practical cooperation, giving immediate and practical implementation to some elements of the EU strategy against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Through our joint action, we support IAEA activities in the areas of nuclear security and verification. IAEA projects supported by the EU aim at strengthening national legislative and regulatory infrastructure for the implementation of international instruments in the areas of nuclear security and control of nuclear and other radioactive materials, and strengthening States' capabilities for detection of, and response to, illicit trafficking in nuclear and other radioactive materials.

The European Union supports the suspension of nuclear cooperation with a State when the IAEA is unable to give sufficient assurances that that State's nuclear programme is intended exclusively for peaceful purposes in line with its international commitments. The suspension should continue until the Agency is able to provide those assurances. We also call for strengthening of the role of the Security Council, as the arbiter of international peace and security, in order that it can take appropriate action in the event of non-compliance with NPT obligations.

We recognize that serious nuclear proliferation events have occurred since the end of the 2000 NPT Review Conference. The EU strongly condemns the announcement of a test of a nuclear explosive device by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. It is unacceptable. The EU is working in close cooperation with the international community for a decisive international response to that provocation.

Defying the Security Council statement of 6 October 2006, the concerns of its neighbours and the calls of the international community, that test profoundly jeopardizes peace and stability in the region and beyond, and represents a clear threat to international peace and security. It is a flagrant breach of the December 1991 North-South Denuclearization Declaration. Furthermore, it violates Security Council resolution 1695 (2006), unanimously adopted after the launch by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea of ballistic missiles. The resolution underlined the need for that country to show restraint and refrain from any action that might aggravate tension.

The European Union strongly urges the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to announce immediately that it will refrain from any further tests of a nuclear device; publicly renounce nuclear weapons and return immediately and without preconditions to the Six-Party Talks, and work towards implementation of the Joint Statement of September 2005; and, in particular, to verifiably abandon all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programmes. The European Union urges the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to return to compliance with the NPT and IAEA safeguards obligations. It further calls on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to sign and ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT).

The EU condemns the provocative missile test launches performed by the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in July, and calls upon that country to re-establish the moratorium on long-range missile testing.

The European Union shares the concern over Iran's nuclear programme expressed by the IAEA Board of Governors and the Security Council. We welcome the adoption of Security Council resolution 1696 (2006), and call upon Iran to respond positively and swiftly to the demands of the international community in implementing it, in particular by suspending all its enrichment-related and reprocessing activities, including research and development, with such action verified by the IAEA, and to take all the steps required by the IAEA in accordance with the resolution.

The European Union reiterates the statement made in London on 6 October by the United Kingdom Foreign Secretary, Margaret Beckett, on behalf of the Foreign Ministers of China, France, Germany, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, the United States and the High Representative of the EU, expressing deep disappointment that Iran is not prepared to suspend its enrichment-related and reprocessing activities, as required by the IAEA Board of Governors and made mandatory by Security Council resolution 1696 (2006), and their decision to consult on measures under Article 41, Chapter VII, of the Charter, as envisaged in that resolution.

The European Union continues to attribute great importance to the fight against terrorism, keeping in mind the tragic events of recent years. It strongly supports all measures aimed at preventing terrorists from acquiring nuclear, biological or chemical weapons and related materials, radiological materials and their means of delivery — measures such as the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, adopted in 2005, and those agreed within the G8 Global Partnership, the Krakow Proliferation Security Initiative and the Global Threat Reduction Initiative.

The International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, IAEA safeguards agreements with additional protocols and a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons, or other nuclear explosive devices, could reduce the risk of nuclear terrorism by curbing the possibilities of an illegal diversion of fissile material.

The European Union welcomes and appreciates the IAEA activities aimed at preventing and combating nuclear terrorism. The IAEA plays a vital role in that area, particularly through its Nuclear Security Fund, to which the European Union is the largest donor this year.

Effective physical protection is of paramount importance for preventing illicit trafficking and ensuring protection against nuclear terrorism and other malicious acts. The European Union welcomed the strengthening of the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material at the Diplomatic Conference in 2005, in Vienna. The EU calls on all States that have not yet done so to become parties to the Convention and its amendment as soon as possible. Likewise, the EU welcomed the adoption in 2005 of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, and hopes that all States will sign, ratify and implement it as soon as possible.

The European Union stresses the importance of the safety and security of radioactive sources and the role of the Code of Conduct adopted by the IAEA General Conference in 2003. EU member States have informed the IAEA Director General in writing that they are committed to following the Code in accordance with the European Directive on the control of high-activity sealed radioactive sources and orphan sources. The EU calls on all countries to declare their political commitment to the Code and to implement the Guidance on the Import and Export of Radioactive Sources.

The world must be united in a common endeavour to strengthen the non-proliferation regime by closing existing loopholes. The EU is committed to strong national and internationally coordinated export controls to complement our obligations under the NPT. EU member States are working towards making the additional protocol a condition of supply for nuclear exports. The European Union supports the strengthening of the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) guidelines, and urges the NSG and the Zangger Committee to share their experience on export controls to meet new non-proliferation challenges.

The European Union supports the pursuit of nuclear disarmament in accordance with article VI of the NPT, and has welcomed the reduction of strategic and non-strategic nuclear weapons and their delivery systems since the end of the cold war. We stress the need for an overall reduction of the global stockpile of nuclear weapons in accordance with article VI of the NPT, in particular by those with the largest arsenals. In that context, we recognize the application of the principle of irreversibility to guide all measures in the field of nuclear disarmament and arms control, as a contribution to the maintenance and enforcement of international peace, security and stability, taking those conditions into account. We are pursuing efforts to secure transparency as a voluntary confidence-building measure. The European Union also calls on all States concerned to take appropriate practical measures in order to reduce the risk of accidental nuclear war.

In that context, the EU highlights the importance of the Declarations made by the Presidents of Russia and of the United States in 1991 and 1992 on unilateral reductions in their stocks of non-strategic nuclear weapons, and calls on all States with non-strategic nuclear weapons to include them in their general arms control and disarmament processes, with a view to the reduction and elimination of those weapons. The EU recognizes the importance, from the point of view of nuclear disarmament, of the programmes for the destruction and elimination of nuclear weapons and the elimination of fissile material, as defined under the G8 Global Partnership.

The EU notes that the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START), which reduced the strategic nuclear weapons arsenal of the United States and of Russia to 6,000 accountable warheads, is due to expire in 2009. We also note that the Moscow Treaty between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on Strategic Offensive Reductions, which limits each side to no more than 1,700 to 2,200 deployed strategic nuclear warheads, will expire on 31 December 2012. The EU welcomes the reductions in deployed nuclear weapons which START and the Moscow Treaty have brought about, and stresses the need for more progress in structurally reducing those nuclear arsenals through appropriate follow-on processes.

The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty is an essential part of the disarmament and non-proliferation regime, and the EU attaches the utmost importance to its entry into force at the earliest possible date. The EU welcomes its ratification by Viet Nam, one of the countries listed in annex 2, and continues to call on all States, particularly annex 2 States, to sign and ratify the Treaty without delay and without conditions. This year's tenth anniversary of the adoption of the CTBT by the General Assembly reminds us all of the need to redouble our efforts to complete the outstanding ratifications required for the Treaty's entry into force. The EU believes that a legally binding prohibition of nuclear-weapon test explosions and all other nuclear explosions, as well as a credible verification regime, are vital. Pending the entry into force of the Treaty, we urge all States to abide by a moratorium and to refrain from any actions that are contrary to the obligations and provisions of the Treaty.

The EU attaches great importance to the work of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO), and actively supports the work of the Special Representative of the States which have ratified the Treaty charged with promoting universal accession to the Treaty. With the launching this year of its Joint Action, the EU extends its support for the CTBTO Preparatory Commission to very practical cooperation, thus giving immediate and practical implementation to

some elements of the EU Strategy against the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction. The Joint Action is designed to support CTBTO Preparatory Commission activities in training and capacity-building for verification. The EU also welcomes the additional and complementary benefits that the CTBT International Monitoring System brings in supporting the early detection of potentially tsunamigenic earthquakes.

The EU attaches clear priority to the negotiations at the Conference on Disarmament on a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, as a means to strengthen disarmament and non-proliferation. That was made clear in the Common Position that the European Union adopted on 25 April 2005 relating to the NPT Review Conference, which it stands by. We are ready to promote the fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT), and support the start of negotiations next spring. We are encouraged by the new momentum on starting the FMCT negotiations, and welcome the fact that the United States has contributed to that momentum at the Conference on Disarmament through the submission of a draft treaty and a draft mandate. We note that the FMCT negotiation mandate proposed by the United States is broadly in line with our position on the FMCT, and that nothing can be precluded from the negotiations. This opportunity should be seized, and was upheld at the Conference on Disarmament by the active participation of delegations during the FMCT focused debate, the presence of experts, the presentation of papers and the participation of the IAEA. Pending the entry into force of an FMCT, the EU calls on all States to declare and uphold a moratorium on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. We welcome the action of those four States that have decreed such moratoriums.

The EU is supportive of pursuing consideration of the issue of security assurances to the non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the NPT. In that context, the EU recalls the relevant aspects of decision 2 adopted at the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference and of the Final Document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference, and bears in mind the current situation. Positive and negative security assurances can play an important role. They can serve both as an incentive to forgo the acquisition of weapons of mass destruction and as a deterrent.

The EU calls on all States in the Middle East to make that region into an effectively verifiable zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems, in keeping with the resolution on the Middle East adopted at the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference.

The EU continues to attach great importance to the development of internationally recognized nuclear-weapon-free zones, established on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among States of the regions concerned, as elaborated in the guidelines adopted by the Disarmament Commission at its 1999 substantive session. Nuclear-weapon-free zones enhance regional and global peace and security, and are a means to promote nuclear disarmament, stability and confidence. The EU welcomes and encourages the signature and ratification by the nuclear-weapon States of the relevant protocols to the nuclear-weapon-free zones, following the completion of necessary consultations. We hope that outstanding issues concerning nuclear-weapon-free zones can be resolved through full consultations in accordance with the Disarmament Commission guidelines and with the agreement of all parties involved.

We also call on nuclear-weapon States to reaffirm, in the appropriate forums, existing nuclear assurances noted by Security Council resolution 984 (1995), and to sign and ratify the relevant protocols on nuclear-weapon-free zones, drawn up following the requisite consultations, recognizing that treaty-based security assurances are available to such zones.

**Mr. Chowdhury** (Bangladesh): Today, as we focus our thoughts on the theme of nuclear weapons, we do so against a grim backdrop of multiple setbacks in recent years. The failure of the 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons to produce a consensus outcome was a huge disappointment. Disagreement on a common disarmament and non-proliferation agenda at the 2005 World Summit resulted in a missed opportunity. As if those matters were not enough, the Conference on Disarmament — the world's sole multilateral forum for disarmament negotiations — has for years been unable to adopt a programme of work. Similarly, its deliberative counterpart, the Disarmament Commission, has remained hobbled by the deep divide among its members.

Clearly, then, these are not the best of times. But can we afford to continue along this path for too long without bringing upon ourselves the most unsavoury consequences? Logic would point to the contrary. Something, obviously, must be done. But such actions can only flow from the appropriate political will.

As we mark the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), we recall how long and hard we worked to put it in place. Yet, regrettably, to date we do not have sufficient ratifications for its entry into force. Without that Treaty, let me unequivocally reiterate, the world will be a far less safe place. We therefore appeal to the remaining 11 annex 2 States whose ratification is essential for entry into force to ratify it at the soonest. We urge all others to observe a moratorium on nuclear testing in the meantime.

In that context, I wish to add that Bangladesh authorities have expressed deep concern over the recent testing by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. We believe that such actions exacerbate the already tense international situation, and serve no positive purpose. We urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to instead return to talks.

It is not that our efforts have always been futile. There have been occasions when we have discerned glimmers of hope, or even brighter prospects. We saw a modicum of achievements in 1995 and 2000. Those must not be weakened. The price we will pay for reneging on our commitments and obligations will be too high. We must build on those successes. We must implement what we have agreed upon. Particular mention must be made of the 13 practical steps adopted by the 2000 Review Conference for the systematic and progressive implementation of article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

We are also heartened by the modest progress made in regard to the application of International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards, with 17 States having signed additional protocols and eight signing comprehensive safeguards agreements. There is also the ever so slight shift in focus in the substantive work of the Conference on Disarmament that occurred this year, which we encourage. I am referring to the work towards an agreed schedule, for the first time in a decade, with particular efforts to reflect the security concerns of all States. The momentum generated must be capitalized upon. The Conference on Disarmament must resume its substantive work in line with the unanimous conclusion of the International Court of Justice that there exists an obligation to pursue in good faith, and bring to a conclusion, negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects, under strict and effective international control.

The best methodology to achieve disarmament and non-proliferation goals is to strive for them in a multilateral framework. That can be free, or be seen to be free, of suspicions that oftentimes shroud bilateral, or even plurilateral, approaches. Meaningful and effective multilateralism in the disarmament machinery would entail activating two fronts: the Conference on Disarmament and the Disarmament Commission. In the Conference on Disarmament, that could be achieved through the resumption of negotiations on a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material. We welcome the positive developments to that end, and the contributions of major nuclear-weapon Powers, including, and in particular, the United States. On the Disarmament Commission front, we need to agree on the agenda of the substantive session, at the same time preparing ourselves to give a boost to the upcoming 2007 meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the next NPT review conference.

It is evident that nuclear-weapon States have demonstrated little will, or progress, towards disarmament. True, some old warheads have been destroyed. But it appears that that is owed to aspirations for modernization rather than the desire to conform to any treaty obligations. Moreover, precision is being added to stockpiles, and newer types of weapons are being developed. Needless to say, those factors enhance the propensity for use and have serious and adverse destabilizing ramifications. There could be a temptation to indulge in surgical strikes, which are presumed to be without excessive collateral damage. Nuclear war-fighting and the aim of winning could become a theoretical possibility.

Everything must be done to prevent the acquisition of nuclear weapons by non-State actors. If their acquisition is seen to be a means to satisfy security needs, and is perceived to add to political or even military clout, it will become attractive for those who have the capabilities to acquire the same. In other words, if some have such weapons that are seen to add to their power, others will want them also. That is incontrovertible logic. For instance, if such weapons

are present in any region, others will seek to deter those who possess them with similar capabilities. Nuclear neighbours do not inspire non-violent predilections, such as voluntary renunciation of weapons. Those are fundamental patterns of human and State behaviour that have remained constant throughout history. If there are States that genuinely feel they need nuclear weapons to enhance their sense of security, we will have failed. If there be one such, soon there will be another and yet another.

Just as justice should not only be done, but should also be seen to be done, our regimes must ensure not only that States are secure, but that they also feel that they are secure. Above all, the regimes must be fair, just and equitable, and must be perceived to be so. Even in the nuclear age, military behaviour is no different from the tactical conventional wisdom, as in the sergeant's famous exhortation to his troops: "Have faith in God, my boys, but keep your powder dry."

In the face of these realities, it is with a sense of pride that Bangladesh can point to its own impeccable disarmament and non-proliferation credentials. We have consciously and unconditionally opted to remain non-nuclear. We were the first annex 2 nation in South Asia to sign and ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. We are also party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, and have concluded safeguards agreements with the International Atomic Energy Agency, including the additional protocols. Those facts are, we believe, adequate testimony to our unflinching and constitutional commitment to the twin goals of disarmament and non-proliferation.

We have adopted the positions that I have described because we have concluded that our safety and security lie in doing so. But our fear is that in the current international climate all may not see it that way. There may be those who extrapolate that their security is buttressed by their acquisition of nuclear weapons, because their perceived sources of threat have them. Our challenge is to persuade them, and persuade all others, that possession of such weapons of mass destruction can never enhance safety and security in the long run, and that till such time as we rid our world of these weapons humanity will remain hostage to their use, or the fear of their use.

Despite the history of setbacks, we have no option but to continue our endeavours to achieve our aims, even though at times they appear unattainable. As a mighty poet said, "a man's reach should exceed his grasp, or what's a heaven for?"

**Mr. Shi Zhonjun** (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): Promoting the process of nuclear disarmament and reducing the danger of nuclear proliferation are of great significance to improving the international security situation and maintaining world peace. The international community must intensify its efforts in the following aspects.

First, nuclear-weapon States should commit to the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons and conclude an international legal instrument at an early date.

Secondly, nuclear disarmament should be a just and reasonable process of gradual reduction towards a lower balance. The two countries possessing the largest nuclear arsenals bear special and primary responsibility for nuclear disarmament. They should further reduce their nuclear arsenals in a verifiable and irreversible manner, in order to create conditions for achieving the ultimate goal of complete and thorough nuclear disarmament. Any nuclear disarmament measure should follow the guidelines of maintaining global strategic balance and stability and undiminished security for all.

Thirdly, until the goal of complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons is achieved, nuclear-weapon States should commit themselves to no first use of nuclear weapons, and undertake unconditionally not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapon States or nuclear-weapon-free zones. The international community should conclude an international legal instrument on negative security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States at an early date.

Fourthly, the Conference on Disarmament should reach agreement on its programme of work as soon as possible, in order to establish ad hoc committees and start substantial work on such issues as nuclear disarmament, security assurances for non-nuclear-weapon States, the fissile material cut-off treaty and the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

Fifthly, efforts should be made to promote the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), and until that happens the moratorium on nuclear testing should be maintained.

China has always stood for the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons and has always been committed to promoting the international nuclear disarmament process. As a nuclear-weapon State, China has never evaded its nuclear disarmament responsibilities and obligations, and has persistently exercised the utmost restraint on the scale and development of its nuclear weapons. China's nuclear arsenal has always been kept at the minimum level necessary for self-defence.

China unconditionally adheres to the policy of no first use of nuclear weapons, and of not using or threatening to use them against non-nuclear-weapon States or nuclear-weapon-free zones. China has declared that it will provide negative and positive security assurances to all non-nuclear-weapon States.

China supports the negotiation and conclusion of a multilateral non-discriminatory, internationally and effectively verifiable fissile material cut-off treaty, according to the mandate contained in the Shannon report, on the basis of a comprehensive and balanced programme of work of the Conference on Disarmament. China is carefully studying the draft treaty suggested by the United States at the Conference on Disarmament.

China firmly supports the CTBT, and spares no effort in promoting its early entry into force. China will continue to honour its moratorium commitment before the Treaty's entry into force.

China respects and supports the efforts by relevant countries and regions to voluntarily establish nuclear-weapon-free zones on the basis of consultations among themselves, and has signed to that end all the protocols to nuclear-weapon-free zone treaties that are open for signature.

Next year will usher in another round of the review process of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). China firmly supports the process, and hopes that all parties will honour their Treaty commitments and pursue a constructive approach to ensure the success of the review conference. China also hopes that the first meeting of the Preparatory Committee will have a good start.

Concerning the nuclear test by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, I will quote the following statement by the Foreign Ministry of the People's Republic of China:

"On October 9 the Democratic People's Republic of Korea flagrantly conducted a nuclear test in disregard of the common opposition of the international community. The Chinese Government is firmly opposed to that act. To bring about denuclearization of the Korean peninsula and oppose nuclear proliferation is the firm and consistent stance of the Chinese Government. China strongly urges the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to honour its commitment to denuclearization, stop all moves that may further worsen the situation and return to the Six-Party Talks.

"To safeguard peace and stability in the North-East Asian region serves the interests of all parties involved. The Chinese Government calls on all parties concerned to be cool-headed in response and to persist in seeking a peaceful solution through consultation and dialogue. China will continue to make every effort towards that goal."

Given the current situation, it is of practical significance and urgency to further promote the nuclear disarmament process. China is ready to work with all countries to actively explore effective ways to achieve complete and thorough nuclear disarmament.

**Mr. Bouchaara** (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): The delegation of the Kingdom of Morocco welcomes this thematic debate on nuclear issues. The risks of nuclear weapons proliferation are a major challenge to the international community. These risks must be closely and objectively studied and analysed. We note, not without some surprise, that, more than 15 years after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of the ideological and strategic confrontation between the blocs, there are still about 27,000 nuclear weapons in the world, 12,000 of which are actively deployed. It must be recognized that these figures are spine-chilling and unlikely to reassure the international community.

The Kingdom of Morocco, deeply committed to the virtues of dialogue and cooperation, believes that only a strategy of small steps, based on the gradual achievement of practical goals, will allow us to progress towards disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. That is why it is vital to reinforce the existing international instruments — in particular, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). At the same time, we must bring about greater

adherence to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). Only its effective and complete implementation will prevent the modernization of existing stocks and indeed the emergence of new nuclear Powers. The CTBT is therefore a fundamental instrument for international security that must be respected in the spirit and the letter.

Effective action geared towards tangible results will require a balanced approach to nuclear issues. In this regard, we should recall that the NPT is based on a balance which must be scrupulously upheld: the obligation on nuclear Powers to work towards general and complete disarmament; the recognized rights to the peaceful use of nuclear energy; and the requirement for non-nuclear States to fully respect their nuclear non-proliferation commitments. This balance, founded on the apportionment of rights and obligations among nuclear and non-nuclear States, must be respected. In turn, we should recall the relevance of the Final Documents of the 1995 and 2000 Review Conferences, which, unfortunately, have only been partially and insufficiently implemented, in particular, with regard to the 1995 decision on the Middle East.

Among the new challenges facing the international community, we should single out the risks of nuclear terrorism. One can only shudder to imagine the terrible consequences of a terrorist attack on a large urban centre with the use of nuclear weapons or components. This challenge must be studied with seriousness and responsibility. The adoption of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) reflects the resolve of the international community to act cooperatively in order to address it.

The continuing proliferation of ballistic missile systems that can be the means of delivery of weapons of mass destruction is another growing challenge to the international community. The Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation is the primary multilateral instrument to combat the proliferation of ballistic missiles. It has allowed us to rectify an obvious deficiency.

Since 22 June, the Kingdom of Morocco has had the honour of chairing the group of States subscribing to the Hague Code. During its mandate my country will spare no effort to promote the objectives of the Code and work towards its universality and thus reduce the risks of ballistic missile proliferation. Currently 125 States subscribe to the Hague Code. That is a significant result, which should be consolidated by making those States that do not yet subscribe to it aware of its unique nature and its vocation to contribute to international security.

At their meeting in Vienna in June the Code's signatory States decided not to submit a draft resolution during the current session of the First Committee. However, the Moroccan delegation plans to take the opportunity during the work of the First Committee to continue its informal consultations and awareness-raising efforts in order to facilitate effective implementation of all the provisions of the Hague Code, thus increasing support for it within the international community, which is our main concern.

**Mr. Paulsen** (Norway): It is conventional wisdom that nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation are interlinked. But sometimes conventional wisdom is correct. It continues to be true that a dismantled and destroyed nuclear weapon cannot be proliferated.

All States have a responsibility to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Member States have taken a number of non-proliferation measures at national level. Export control regimes have been developed, and Norway is an active stakeholder in these regimes. However, the guidelines are not universally implemented. So we call upon all States to implement effective national export control measures. In doing so, they will better positioned to benefit from peaceful nuclear cooperation.

Apart from the export control regimes, the international community is called upon by Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) to do its utmost to prevent terrorists gaining access to weapons of mass destruction. In this regard, we call on all States to ratify and implement the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, adopted by the General Assembly last year.

Let me also underline that adequate physical protection of nuclear material is of crucial importance. More efforts are needed to convert nuclear research reactors in the civilian sector from being fuelled by highly enriched uranium to being fuelled by low-enriched uranium. We cannot allow civilian highly enriched uranium to fall into the hands of terrorists.

I reiterate Norway's firm support for the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) comprehensive safeguards and the additional protocols.

As Finland emphasized on behalf of the European Union in its brief statement this morning, Norway also continues to work towards universal accession to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

While all States have a shared responsibility to contribute to non-proliferation, obviously the nuclear-weapon States have an additional responsibility in the field of nuclear constraint and disarmament. A range of efforts can be envisaged. Let me mention a few.

First, some nuclear-weapon States are more transparent than others about nuclear issues. We encourage increased transparency across the board. More needs to be done, but many nuclear weapons have been destroyed since 1990. We appeal to the nuclear-weapon States to take credit for this by being more transparent about their nuclear programmes.

Secondly, it is our hope that the Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty will be renewed and strengthened on the basis of the principle of irreversibility and verification.

Thirdly, negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear-weapons purposes should start immediately. Pending that, all nuclear-weapon States are called upon to declare or reconfirm moratoriums on the production of such material. Military excess weapons-grade fissile material should be reduced, by converting it into nuclear fuel for civilian purposes. In that way, disarmament can contribute to the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

Fourthly, the relevant States should make every effort to enable the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty to enter into force. In the meantime, we expect a full moratorium on nuclear test explosions to be observed. In that respect, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is moving in a very wrong and totally unacceptable direction.

Fifthly, there is a certain alert time between the decision point and the trigger point as regards the use of a nuclear weapon. It is the view of my delegation that the longer that alert time is, the fewer the chances of an accidental nuclear exchange.

Sixthly, there is widespread support for the concept of nuclear-weapon-free zones. Yet only one such zone has entered into force with the protocols ratified by nuclear-weapon States. We must explore, with the active participation of the nuclear-weapon States, how the other zones can realize their potential.

Finally, Under-Secretary-General Tanaka referred yesterday to a certain fatigue in the international community with regard to nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. He is probably right, for a number of reasons, which I will not discuss now. But the wake-up call last Sunday was loud and frightening. The urgency that we now sense should inspire us to reach agreement on more resolutions and decisions than we are used to in the First Committee. Resolutions do not save the world, but they are — at least normally — a valuable contribution.

**Mr. Mine** (Japan): In view of the time constraints, I shall address only important items.

I start with nuclear disarmament. After the entry into force of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the United States and the Russian Federation started to engage in the limitation and reduction of nuclear weapons. However, according to some unofficial data, it is estimated that about 16,000 nuclear weapons remain. We recall that States are encouraged to take further steps leading to nuclear disarmament under article VI of the NPT.

Japan commends the efforts by the United States and the Russian Federation to reduce nuclear arsenals, in accordance with the Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty, the Moscow Treaty, and encourages them to undertake nuclear arms reductions beyond those provided for by the Treaty, stressing the importance of the principles of irreversibility, verifiability and increased transparency. In that context, Japan will pay close attention to the consultations between the United States and the Russian Federation on the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, which expires in 2009. We hope that the other nuclear-weapon States will make similar or further efforts to reduce nuclear arsenals, in accordance with their commitments made at the 1995 and 2000 NPT Review Conferences.

The nuclear-weapon States should further reduce the operational status of nuclear-weapons systems in ways that promote international stability and security. In addition, diminishing the role of nuclear weapons in security policies is essential to minimize the risk that the weapons will ever be used, and to facilitate the process of their total elimination.

Universalization of the NPT is equally important. Japan appeals to the non-NPT States that possess nuclear weapons to accede to the Treaty as non-nuclear-weapon States without delay and without conditions.

A fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT) is the most realistic logical step for the next multilateral legal disarmament measure. An FMCT is often described primarily as a non-proliferation issue. Nevertheless, under it, States possessing fissile material for nuclear weapons would be, at a minimum, obliged to cap fissile material production, which is not an explicit legal obligation for the nuclear-weapon States under the NPT. Consequently, regardless of the treatment of existing stocks, an FMCT would provide the effect of irreversibility, since States possessing fissile material for nuclear weapons would no longer be permitted to produce such material. Only such capping can lead to the reduction and subsequent elimination of fissile material for nuclear weapons. Therefore, an FMCT is also significant as a nuclear disarmament measure, which would enhance the disarmament aspect of the NPT.

In the focused debates at the Conference on Disarmament this year, discussions took place on all aspects of an FMCT, including definition, scope, stocks and verification, almost exhausting the time allocated in the formal and informal meetings. Furthermore, although there are a range of opinions about the whole Conference schedule, it is significant that throughout this year's session no country — including the nuclear-weapon States — expressed opposition to the establishment of an ad hoc committee to negotiate an FMCT in the Conference.

I re-emphasize here what I concluded in my statement at one of the final meetings of the Conference: while further deliberations are required within the Conference on all four major agenda items, only an FMCT has reached the stage of the establishment of an ad hoc committee for negotiations. Once again, Japan calls for the immediate commencement of negotiations on an FMCT in the Conference on Disarmament.

I would like to speak again about the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, because that is such an important item. It announced on 9 October that it had conducted a nuclear test, and a relevant authority in Japan detected a seismic wave with an abnormal wave pattern. That act by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, combined with its build-up of ballistic missiles that may be capable of delivering weapons of mass destruction, is a grave problem and causes extremely deep concern. It is a serious challenge to Japan's security, and is totally unacceptable. Japan firmly protests against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, and categorically denounces its act.

The nuclear test by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea poses a grave threat to the peace and security not only of Japan, but also of East Asia and the entire international community. This constitutes a serious challenge to the NPT regime, and not only violates the Japan-Democratic People's Republic of Korea Pyongyang Declaration and the Six-Party Talks Joint Statement, but also disregards the spirit of Security Council resolution 1695 (2006) and the 6 October statement (S/PRST/2006/41) by the President of the Council.

For that reason, Japan put forward this issue in the Security Council on 9 October and has addressed it in the First Committee, together with the rest of the United Nations Members. As a Member State of the United Nations, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is obliged to faithfully implement Security Council resolution 1695 (2006). Japan once again strongly demands that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea fully implement the Six-Party Talks Joint Statement, in which the Democratic People's Republic of Korea committed itself to abandoning all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programmes and to returning to the NPT and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards at an early date.

In relation to the issue of Iran's nuclear programme, the confidence of the international community, which is a fundamental requirement when conducting sensitive nuclear activities, such as enrichment and reprocessing, has not been restored.

Japan strongly urges Iran to comply fully with Security Council resolution 1696 (2006) by promptly suspending all enrichment-related activities and returning to the negotiation process.

Japan has long supported the efforts to negotiate a treaty on a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia. Japan regards the signing on 8 September of this Treaty in Semipalatinsk by the five central Asian countries as an effort to strengthen the peace and stability of the region, as well as nuclear non-proliferation. At the

same time, as stipulated in the principles and guidelines in the 1999 Disarmament Commission report, it is important that nuclear-weapon States be consulted during the negotiation of each treaty and its relevant protocols establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone, in order to facilitate their signature and ratification of the relevant protocols to the treaty. In this regard, Japan takes note of the expressed readiness of the five Central Asian countries to continue consultations on some points of the Treaty. Japan will pay close attention to future consultations among the countries concerned, so as to ensure the Treaty's contribution to the peace and stability of the region.

Finally, I would like to introduce a draft resolution on nuclear disarmament. Last year, we redrafted our previous draft resolution in stronger, yet more concise, terms. That draft resolution, entitled "Renewed determination towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons", was not only adopted with votes in favour by 168 countries, the highest number since submission of the original draft resolution, but also gained broad support from countries of differing positions. This demonstrates that, despite the two failures at both the NPT Review Conference and the United Nations Summit last year, common ground exists in the international community for specific guidance in promoting nuclear disarmament.

This year, in addition to the draft text's emphasizing the importance of next year's start of the new NPT review process, language has been added calling for the immediate commencement of substantive work to its fullest at the Conference on Disarmament, in view of this year's positive development, as well as expressing deep concern over the statement by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea that it had conducted a nuclear test.

Japan hopes that all countries, including the nuclear-weapon States, regardless of any differences in position, will unite and support our draft resolution, with a view to achieving the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

**Mr. Streuli** (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): The Democratic People's Republic of Korea announced that on 9 October 2006 it had carried out an underground nuclear test, despite the Security Council presidential statement of 6 October and the international community's many appeals for moderation. Switzerland condemns the test, which runs counter to the international community's nuclear n proliferation efforts and threatens the security of region and beyond. In fact, it could unleash an a race, whose consequences could escape our control.

The test also seriously affects attempts universalize the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-I Treaty (CTBT) and its implementation. Such a tes contrary to the spirit of the CTBT, which has b signed by 176 States and ratified by 135. Switzerl calls upon the Democratic People's Republic of Ko to sign and ratify the CTBT as soon as possible. O number of occasions, Switzerland has called upon accede again to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Tre (NPT), from which it withdrew in 2003.

Switzerland is convinced that a peaceful solut to the nuclear problem in the Korean peninsula sho be sought within the framework of the Six-Party Tal My country calls upon all parties concerned in process to show a spirit of consensus, which wo allow it to restart quickly.

Switzerland supports all multilateral disarmam and armaments control efforts leading to concrete verifiable results. It regards the NPT as the only lega binding global instrument designed to promote n proliferation and nuclear disarmament. It is in sense an essential tool for international peace stability.

As we are in the initial phase of the new revi cycle, Switzerland would stress that the pres emphasis on nuclear proliferation should not lead our overlooking the other two pillars of the N nuclear disarmament and the peaceful uses of nucl energy. In my country's opinion, it is essential respect the compromise that led to the conclusion the NPT — namely, the renunciation of nucl weapons by States in exchange for a commitment the nuclear Powers to pursue complete nucl disarmament. While the great majority of States part without nuclear weapons have respected commitment, and have not acquired such weapons, call upon the nuclear-weapon States to continue th progressive efforts to fulfil their disarmam obligations.

There has undoubtedly been some posit progress since the 2000 Review Conference. T Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty (SORT) has to considerable reductions in strategic nucl weapons, and is a welcome step in the right directi

But Switzerland believes that, to be credible, all such nuclear disarmament efforts, bilateral or unilateral, should incorporate the principles of transparency, irreversibility and verification.

On non-strategic nuclear weapons, the balance sheet is mixed. We notice that, unfortunately, there is a big gap between unilateral promises and actual achievements.

Switzerland has fulfilled all its obligations under the Final Documents of the Review Conferences of 1995 and 2000. With regard to the achievements of 1995, Switzerland stresses that it is essential to respect the principles and objectives of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, and would like to highlight the following points, on which a start has been made: first, the ratification, without delay, of the CTBT by the States listed in annex 2 of the Treaty; secondly, the start — as soon as possible — of negotiations within the Conference on Disarmament on a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT); and, thirdly, the negotiation of a binding multilateral instrument within the framework of the Conference on Disarmament in order to offer negative security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the NPT.

The Swiss delegation has submitted to the Conference on Disarmament a working paper (CD/1771) entitled "A Pragmatic Approach to the Verification of a FMCT", drafted by one of our experts, Mr. Bruno Pellaud, a nuclear consultant and former Deputy Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). The paper sets out the various aspects and definitions relating to the scope of such a treaty and suggests in particular a realistic approach to verification, aiming at a worldwide cut-off of all production of fissile materials for military purposes.

With this practical conclusion, we underscore our desire to have a fissile material cut-off treaty, without conditions, negotiated as quickly as possible.

**Mr. Koshelev** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): As President Vladimir Putin stated yesterday, Russia condemns the nuclear test in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Tremendous damage has been inflicted on the process of non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. We hope that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will return to the negotiating process.

We have repeatedly stressed that such a step, whatever the reasons for it, could only aggravate the problems in the Korean peninsula. It is fraught with danger to peace, security and stability in the region by undermining the nuclear non-proliferation regime. The statement of the Russian Foreign Ministry on this issue demands that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea take immediate steps to return to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) regime and to resume the Six-Party Talks.

Recent developments confirm yet again the importance of nuclear disarmament, and remind us of the need for strict compliance by all States with their international obligations in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, as well as for measures to prevent these deadly weapons from falling into the hands of terrorists.

Russia has ratified the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, which provides a solid basis for international cooperation in combating terrorism and the spread of weapons of mass destruction. Its logical continuation is the initiative by the Presidents of Russia and the United States, namely, the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, whose goals are to assist the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004); ensure the certain prosecution of terrorists; improve the accounting control and protection procedures applied to nuclear materials and facilities; and promote cooperation in developing technical means for combating nuclear terrorism.

Another initiative by the President of Russia, Vladimir Putin, to establish centres for international nuclear fuel-cycle services, is also highly appreciated by the international community. This initiative provides an alternative to the development of the sensitive elements of the nuclear fuel cycle, namely, the enrichment and reprocessing of spent nuclear fuel. We are ready to work with all other interested countries to finalize and further develop the initiative, with the active involvement of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

Russia implements its obligations on the gradual reduction of its nuclear arsenals within the framework of its agreements with the United States, as well as on a unilateral basis. Over recent years this process has acquired additional momentum.

At the last NPT Review Conference, Russia provided concrete information on its nuclear weapons reductions. The aggregate of Russian nuclear weapons stocks is now less than a fifth of what it was in 1991. Russia continues to implement the Treaty on Strategic Offensive Arms (START) and has reduced its nuclear arsenals much faster than required under the schedule envisaged by the Treaty. Despite the implementation of its obligations ahead of schedule, Russia has pursued the policy of further elimination of strategic offensive weapons. We have proposed to our partners in the United States the launching of a negotiating process, because the current Treaty expires in December 2009.

The Moscow Treaty between the United States and the Russian Federation on Strategic Offensive Reductions, together with the Russian-American Joint Declaration on the New Strategic Relationship, is a major step forward in nuclear disarmament and is important for the development of the international security system in the twenty-first century. The Moscow Treaty ensures the continuity of the nuclear disarmament and arms control processes, and is a tangible contribution to implementation by Russia of article VI of the NPT.

Under the Moscow Treaty, by the end of 2012 Russia and the United States must additionally reduce the stocks of their strategic nuclear warheads to approximately one third of the levels set by START for the end of 2001. The President of the Russian Federation has repeatedly stated that Russia is prepared to reduce its nuclear arsenal, on a reciprocal basis, to the level of 1,500 warheads or less.

Russia's non-strategic nuclear arsenal has been reduced to one quarter of its former level and is today located only within the national boundaries at central storage depots of the Ministry of Defence. We believe it is important that, following Russia's example, all non-strategic nuclear weapons and their associated infrastructure be relocated to the territory of States that own them. Our future policy will continue to be guided by the need to ensure the irreversibility of nuclear weapons reductions.

We attach particular importance to the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), which Russia has ratified. The Treaty's purpose is to provide a dependable barrier to qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons and strengthen the irreversibility of their ongoing reductions. The Treaty is an essential component of the international security system, as well as a crucial factor in preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

We welcome Viet Nam's ratification of the Treaty. We hope that the remaining 10 States on the list of 44 will take the necessary steps to adhere to the Treaty as soon as possible. It is also important, in the interim, to continue to observe the moratorium on the testing of nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosions.

The Russian Federation believes that the establishment of a fissile material cut-off treaty will be an important step in nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. We have consistently called for an early compromise on a balanced programme of work for the Conference on Disarmament, which would make it possible to resume negotiations on such a treaty. We have taken substantive practical steps towards such a compromise.

We welcome the signing on 8 September 2006 of the Treaty establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia, an important event in the field of nuclear non-proliferation that also strengthens the NPT regime.

Russia has demonstrated by deeds its commitment to its obligations under the NPT. We believe in strict compliance with, and the strengthening of, that crucially important Treaty. We also continue to believe that all challenges and threats to the non-proliferation regime can and must be resolved on the basis of the NPT.

We call upon all States to strictly comply with their commitments under their IAEA Safeguards Agreements, and to develop effective measures aimed at preventing the illicit trade in nuclear equipment, technology and materials. We have consistently called for strengthening the IAEA safeguards system and for the universalization of the additional protocol on the application of safeguards, which would enable the Agency to monitor the use of nuclear materials and equipment for strictly peaceful purposes and to guarantee transparency in national nuclear programmes.

Russia has developed and implemented a national scientific and technological support programme for the Agency's safeguards. In the context of the IAEA Plan of Activities to Protect Against Nuclear Terrorism,

Russia is working with the United States to carry out a project to address the problem posed by dangerous radioactive sources.

It is important to bear in mind that reductions by nuclear-weapon States in the number of nuclear weapons do not occur in a vacuum. The prospects for reducing the number of nuclear weapons, and the process itself, are closely linked with the implementation of key agreements in the areas of arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation. They are of course also influenced by increased funding for military preparedness in a number of countries, as well as by the emergence of new weapons systems, including antiballistic missile defence systems.

There is no doubt that the deployment of weapons in outer space would be a serious destabilizing factor with grave consequences for the entire process of disarmament, arms control and international security.

In general, we believe that the total elimination of nuclear weapons is possible, but that it can be achieved only through gradual progress, without artificial haste and on the basis of a comprehensive approach that includes all nuclear-weapon States. Of course, strategic stability must also be maintained, and the principle of equal security for all must be respected. We shall be guided by just such an approach in determining our position on draft resolutions concerning nuclear weapons. As in previous years, we shall support realistic and balanced ideas and proposals in that regard.

**Mr. Chang Dong-hee** (Republic of Korea): At the outset of our thematic debate, Madam, let me extend to you my delegation's compliments on your excellent guidance of the Committee. I assure you of my delegation's full support.

Last year, the international community witnessed two significant failures in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation: neither the seventh Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) nor the World Summit was able to produce any substantive outcome in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. The long-anticipated Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, held in July, also failed to produce a final document, putting the whole disarmament regime into disarray. As the Commission on Weapons of Mass Destruction rightly pointed out in its report, "Weapons of Terror", at page 22, it is time for us to renew our cooperation and breathe new life into the international machinery for disarmament and non-proliferation.

Nuclear disarmament is vitally important to lasting international peace and security. Although we acknowledge the significance of the progress that nuclear-weapon States have made thus far in reducing nuclear arsenals, progress that includes the Moscow Treaty, there remains a wide gap between what non-nuclear-weapon States had hoped for and what nuclear-weapon States have actually achieved. Closing that gap is crucial to restoring trust and a more cooperative spirit between the nuclear haves and the nuclear have-nots. My delegation therefore calls upon all nuclear-weapon States to implement their NPT article VI obligations in good faith by carrying out the 13 practical steps contained in the Final Document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference.

In the meantime, to relieve the security concerns of non-nuclear-weapon States, we believe nuclear-weapon States should grant strong and credible security assurances to NPT States parties that are in full compliance with the Treaty and other safeguards obligations. It must be absolutely clear to all States that the path to security and stability is not nuclear weapons, but disarmament and compliance with international obligations and norms.

The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT) are two essential means of complementing and strengthening the NPT regime. By placing qualitative and quantitative caps on the development of nuclear weapons, bringing these Treaties into force would be a major step towards our ultimate goal of the complete elimination of nuclear weapons.

The CTBT's early entry into force is paramount for the eventual elimination of nuclear arsenals. This year marks the tenth anniversary of the Treaty's opening for signature, yet the prospect of its entry into force in the near future remains bleak. We have been sitting on this egg for a decade, and it is now time it hatched and took wing. My delegation strongly calls upon those States that have not yet ratified the Treaty, in particular the remaining 10 annex 2 States, to do so without further delay.

The next logical step following the CTBT is an FMCT, the early conclusion of which we cannot over-emphasize. In this regard, we highly appreciate the United States proposed draft mandate and treaty, tabled last May, which we believe provide us with a solid basis for starting negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament. In the meantime, considering the urgent need to curb the production of fissile materials, we urge all States with nuclear capabilities to declare voluntary moratoriums on the production of fissile materials for weapons purposes without delay. This would certainly be conducive to enhancing transparency and building confidence among States.

Despite the setbacks and challenges that confront it, the NPT remains the cornerstone of global nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament efforts. As such, it should be further strengthened. In addition to continuing to work to ensure universal adherence to the NPT, we should also strive towards universal application of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) additional protocol, whose universal application would undoubtedly enhance global confidence in the NPT regime itself by bolstering its monitoring and verification mechanisms. As we embark next year on the preparatory process for the eighth Review Conference, we should strive to make the NPT function more effectively so that it can stand up to the challenges before us.

In spite of the nuclear non-proliferation efforts of the international community, North-East Asia unfortunately remains the locus of a pressing nuclear issue. To our great dismay, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea announced on 9 October that it had conducted a test of a nuclear weapon. The Government of the Republic of Korea strongly condemns the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's act as a serious threat to peace and stability on the Korean peninsula and throughout North-East Asia. The nuclear test also constitutes a flagrant violation of the Joint Statement of 19 September 2005, Security Council resolution 1695 (2006) of 15 July and the Joint Declaration on the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula of 1991. My delegation reminds the Democratic People's Republic of Korea that such a provocative act will not be condoned or tolerated. We again urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to abandon immediately all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programmes, to faithfully abide by the NPT regime, and, finally, to behave as a responsible member of the international community.

**Mr. Zarka** (Israel): I cannot but start with the latest, regrettable developments on the Korean peninsula. Israel joins others in the international community in condemning North Korea's nuclear test. This test is, in our opinion, an irresponsible and provocative act that poses a serious threat not only to the regional stability of North-East Asia, but also to global and international security. Israel reiterates its call to continue the moratorium on nuclear testing and expects North Korea to refrain from any action that could worsen the situation. Israel renews its calls on the international community to firmly see to the implementation of Security Council resolutions adopted to deal with the threat of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

Israel has long advocated global and complete disarmament in the spirit of its prophets, articulated in the vision:

> "they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree, and none shall make them afraid" (*Holy Bible, Micah 4, 3-4*).

To this day, Israel remains committed to a vision of the Middle East developing into a zone free of chemical, biological and nuclear weapons, as well as ballistic missiles. Yet we are also realistic enough to know that, in the current realities of the Middle East, this noble vision will not materialize any time soon. As has been the case in virtually every other region, such a vision cannot be pursued out of context. A nuclear-weapon-free zone can emerge only as an outgrowth of a fundamental transformation of the regional political-strategic climate, through a gradual process of building mutual trust and reconciliation, followed by more modest arms control measures.

Given the global state of disarmament, we need in the interim to address other important developments. In our view, it is rather obvious that the rising global energy demand, coupled with an acute need for ever growing use of non-polluting energy sources, requires us to make nuclear power abundantly available. This can be done only if nuclear power can be made at once safe, reliable, and proliferation-resistant. The desire to

allow for a wider use of nuclear power needs to be balanced with the necessity to limit the spread of sensitive nuclear technology. This is especially urgent in light of the growing threats and challenges to the non-proliferation regime and some States' poor track record of compliance with nuclear non-proliferation obligations and norms in the past decade.

Given the inherently dual nature of nuclear fuel cycle technology, we need to consider the attributes of States possessing such technology and their willingness to shoulder the heavy burden of responsibility as well as accountability to internationally promulgated norms in the non-proliferation and nuclear security domain. Above all, States that threaten others, support terrorism or deny the right of other States to exist cannot be trusted with this sensitive technology.

Conversely, we in Israel recognize the special responsibility we shoulder. We have been engaged in a concerted effort to bring ourselves formally closer, wherever possible, to international norms on nuclear safety, security and non-proliferation. We have also stepped up our efforts to help shape and promote new norms in these domains, hoping that these will, in turn, also favourably impact on our region.

Permit me to highlight just a few of our more recent undertakings in these areas. An intense inter-agency effort over several years has brought Israel into full adherence with the Nuclear Suppliers Group guidelines, as recognized by the Group during its last plenary meeting in Brasilia. Israel has complemented its export control effort with support for, and active participation in, the Proliferation Security Initiative.

Our nuclear security efforts have further expanded to endorse and actively support the Global Threat Reduction Initiative. In this vein, Israel, like others, has submitted a report on its implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004). Furthermore, we welcomed Security Council resolution 1673 (2006) extending the mandate of the 1540 Committee in promoting the full implementation of the resolution.

Israel has endorsed and launched the ratification process of the upgraded Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (CPPNM) as well as the Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. In addition, we have supported all along and are implementing the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources, as well as the Agency's Code of Conduct on the Safety of Research Reactors. In cooperation with the United States Department of Energy, we are stepping up the security of our international border crossings in order to prevent illicit trafficking of nuclear and radiological materials.

Our broader effort includes, in the context of the IAEA Safety Standards Commission, further development of the national and global standards for stringent nuclear security measures. One of the areas recognized as warranting high priority is the transport, storage and waste management of radioactive sources.

Even more broadly, Israel not only remains formally committed to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), but also actively supports and participates in the work of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO). We look forward to finalizing the preparations for the Organization and having it fully ready for entry into force. We also sincerely hope that enough support can be marshalled to draw on some of the non-proliferation and other benefits its existence offers, even in its current transitional state, and support the commitment by all States parties to the Treaty, pending its entry into force, not to conduct nuclear test explosions, in line with the Treaty's basic obligations.

Finally, notwithstanding our limited size and resources, our vested interest in the success of the non-proliferation regime has propelled us to search for ways to support the development by others of safe, reliable and proliferation-resistant nuclear power technology; to work to enhance the efficiency of safeguards measures and technology; and to promote new international norms governing dissemination of new fuel-cycle facilities. It is our strong belief that arrangements such as nuclear fuel lease/take-back, credible supply assurances and international spent fuel storage options should be studied and developed as the highest priority.

**Mr. Meyer** (Canada): These are challenging times for nuclear non-proliferation arms control and disarmament, and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in particular. We can all agree that we have not made the progress we had hoped. Some have even questioned whether the entire multilateral nuclear non-proliferation disarmament infrastructure is losing its relevance and thus its effectiveness. However, the principles underlying the NPT as well as the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and

other international instruments are just as relevant in today's world as they ever have been.

North Korea's irresponsible and dangerous act of announcing that it has conducted the testing of a nuclear explosive device demonstrates vividly the vital requirement to preserve and further strengthen the existing nuclear non-proliferation arms control and disarmament regime. Canada believes that the NPT must continue to serve as the cornerstone of this regime. The alternative to a strong non-proliferation arms control and disarmament regime, anchored by the NPT, is inevitable, unconstrained growth in the number of nuclear-weapon States. Now is not the time for despair or resigned passiveness. Canada believes that the power and authority of the NPT needs to be reinforced rapidly in the face of these real-world challenges.

As for individual States themselves, they must work to ensure that policies, pronouncements and actions continue to be compatible with a progressive and consistent movement towards nuclear disarmament. There is a role for both nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States in this regard. There have been some steps forward. A number of nuclear-weapon States have made significant and welcome progress in reducing their nuclear arsenals.

However, there continue to be worrying signs, as States demonstrate increased reluctance to consider further reductions, new doctrines are mooted which would assert a role for nuclear weapons as war-fighting tools, and plans for new nuclear weapons are discussed. These developments directly challenge our nuclear disarmament efforts. We encourage all States possessing nuclear weapons to continue to reduce and dismantle them in a secure, irreversible and verifiable manner. The role of confidence- and security-building measures in contributing to this process should also not be overlooked.

The CTBT remains a key piece of unfinished business in the nuclear weapons file. We need to encourage the last 10 annex 2 states to sign or ratify the Treaty and join the 176 signatories that wish to put a definitive end to nuclear- weapon testing. Existing moratoriums on nuclear tests are welcome signs of restraint, but they can be terminated with a press release.

Yesterday's announcement by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea underlines the necessity for a universal, legally-binding and permanent international ban on all nuclear test explosions. Political declarations of intent can be encouraging, but are not enough in themselves. There are no substitutes for a legally binding compact. Canada was pleased to join with other "Friends of the CTBT" here last month to direct political attention to the need to put into place this crucial support beam for the nuclear non-proliferation edifice. In an effort to make further progress in universalizing the Treaty, Canada and Mexico will co-host a regional workshop in Mexico City later this week on the implementation of the Treaty in the Greater Caribbean. States should also continue to support the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization's International Monitoring System, which is unique in its capability as a global, real-time verification mechanism.

From Canada's perspective, the next milestone on the path to nuclear disarmament is a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT). Other efforts to rid the world of nuclear weapons will be reinforced once the actual production of fissile materials for weapons is ended. We must build on the positive momentum demonstrated this year in the Conference on Disarmament on the FMCT. In this regard, Canada will introduce in this Committee a draft resolution calling for the immediate commencement of negotiations on an FMCT. There is broad support, and the timing is right. The time to act is now.

**Mr. Luaces** (United States): The United States believes strongly that achieving a legally binding ban on the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons is a desirable goal. One way to accomplish it would be through the negotiation at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva of a treaty banning the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. We aim to conclude a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT) as soon as possible.

The United States has given considerable thought to what an FMCT should look like. The draft treaty that we put forward in Geneva on 18 May, copies of which are available here, sets forth the essentials of a fissile material cut-off treaty that would meet the objective of ending expeditiously the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons. The basic obligation under such a treaty, effective at entry into force, would be a ban on the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.

Stocks of existing fissile material would be unaffected by the treaty. The production of fissile material for non-explosive purposes, such as fuel for naval propulsion, also would be unaffected by the treaty.

The definitions set forth in the United States draft treaty of "fissile material" and "production" represent the outgrowth of the decade-long international discussion regarding what an FMCT should encompass. We believe that the definitions in that text are appropriate for the purposes of a cut-off treaty without any provision for verification.

The United States draft treaty omits verification provisions, consistent with the United States position that so-called effective verification of a fissile material cut-off treaty cannot be achieved. The ability to determine compliance with a high level of confidence is a requirement for effective verification. The United States has concluded that, even with extensive verification mechanisms and provisions — so extensive that they could compromise the core national security interests of key signatories, and so costly that many countries would be hesitant to implement them — we still would not have high confidence in our ability to monitor compliance with a cut-off treaty.

Furthermore, mechanisms and provisions that provide the appearance of effective verification without supplying its reality could be more dangerous than having no explicit provisions for verification. Such mechanisms and provisions could provide a false sense of security, encouraging countries to assume that, because they existed, there would be no need for Governments themselves, individually or collectively, to be wary and vigilant against possible violations.

Negotiating an international ban on the future production of fissile material for nuclear weapons will be a difficult enough task, in and of itself. Avoiding time-consuming and, we believe, futile efforts to negotiate so-called effective verification measures will expedite action by the Conference on Disarmament to conclude a legally binding ban on the production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. The United States believes that only by focusing on realistic objectives can the Conference on Disarmament create the conditions necessary for negotiating a fissile material cut-off treaty. The successful negotiation of an FMCT in the Conference on Disarmament will be both a significant contribution to the global non-proliferation regime and an example of truly effective multilateralism.

The United States hopes that negotiations in Geneva on an FMCT can begin and conclude in the very near future. We also reiterate our view that, pending the conclusion of a cut-off treaty and its entry into force, all States should declare publicly — and observe — a moratorium on the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons, such as the United States has maintained since 1988.

**Ms. Millar** (Australia): This debate on nuclear issues takes place at a crucial time. North Korea's announcement that it conducted a nuclear test on 9 October is a grave threat to international peace and security, particularly for North-East Asia.

North Korea's actions are unacceptable, and Australia condemns them unreservedly and in the strongest possible terms. This provocation will only serve to raise tensions on the Korean peninsula. It is totally at odds with Pyongyang's oft-stated claim that it seeks a denuclearized Korean peninsula, and sets back efforts to resolve peacefully the threat to peace and stability posed by North Korea's nuclear weapons programme.

North Korea should abandon its nuclear weapons and its nuclear weapons programmes, return immediately and unconditionally to the Six-Party Talks and honour and implement its commitment under the September 2005 Joint Statement to return to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and to International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards at an early date. Australia calls upon the international community to support a unified and strong response to North Korea's actions, and to encourage North Korea to become a responsible member of the international community.

North Korea's actions underscore the urgent need for the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). Australia takes great pride in introducing the CTBT draft resolution in this the tenth anniversary of the treaty's opening for signature. Australia led international action to bring the CTBT to the United Nations, where it was adopted by an overwhelming majority of States in 1996. Since then, the Treaty has established a norm against nuclear testing, but still further signings and ratifications are required to lock in this norm for all time.

The central message of this year's draft resolution is to urge all States to sign and ratify the Treaty, in particular those States whose ratification is required for its entry into force. We urge maintenance of test moratoriums, and call on all States to refrain from actions that would defeat the objective of the Treaty.

The draft resolution also reaffirms the vital need to continue work on building the verification regime that will enable verification of compliance with the Treaty. Australia urges all States to support the CTBT draft resolution.

The lack of a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT) remains a significant shortcoming in the international community's nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament efforts. It is difficult to conceive of lasting nuclear disarmament without the assurance that States will not revert to fissile material production for weapons purposes. Thus a key objective of all States committed to the goal of nuclear disarmament should be to conclude a treaty that secures the commitment of States parties to end fissile material production for nuclear weapons.

Australia shares the frustration of many over the lack of progress toward a fissile material cut-off treaty within the Conference on Disarmament over the past few years. For this reason, we were greatly encouraged by the thematic debate on a cut-off treaty in the Conference on Disarmament in May this year. It was clear from the debate that support for an FMCT is strong. Of particular significance was the tabling of a draft treaty and negotiating mandate by the United States. As a supporter of an FMCT that provides for appropriate measures to verify compliance, Australia considers that the draft United States mandate provides a basis for moving forward to negotiation of such a treaty. Moreover, the mandate is without prejudice to work that may be undertaken on other issues on the Conference on Disarmament's agenda.

Accordingly, Australia urges States to redouble efforts to find a pragmatic solution to the impasse that has beset the Conference on Disarmament for a decade, thereby building on the encouraging progress made under this year's six Presidents' initiative.

**Mr. Da Rocha Paranhos** (Brazil) (*spoke in Spanish*): I am taking the floor on behalf of the member States of MERCOSUR — Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay and Venezuela — and the associated States, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru.

As States that have renounced the nuclear option and have solid credentials in the area of non-proliferation, we continue to actively promote strict compliance with all the obligations set out in the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the cornerstone of the disarmament and non-proliferation regime. In that context, we reiterate the need to honour the commitments made at the 1995 and 2000 Review Conferences of the parties to the NPT, particularly the 13 practical steps agreed in 2000.

The States members of MERCOSUR and the associated States regret the lack of substantive results at the 2005 Review Conference and the absence of any reference to the issue of disarmament and non-proliferation in the Outcome Document of the 2005 World Summit. That lack of results is yet another disturbing sign indicating a process of reinterpreting the Treaty. Ideas or proposals to that end are unacceptable and contrary to the letter and the spirit of the NPT. It is essential to maintain the balance between rights and obligations underpinning it.

It should be recalled that the NPT is based on the conviction that a world free from nuclear weapons is a safer and better world for our generation and future generations, a world in which no one — neither States nor non-State actors — has the chance to use the destructive power of such weapons. A multilateral, transparent, verifiable and irreversible nuclear disarmament process is essential if we are to prevent the dangers of nuclear proliferation. In that connection, we emphasize the need to comply with the disarmament obligations set out in article VI of the NPT.

The task of totally eliminating nuclear weapons must be based on a systematic approach that includes the components of disarmament, verification, assistance and cooperation. Our delegations believe it is essential to ensure balanced implementation of the NPT, whose effectiveness depends on scrupulous compliance with its three pillars. In that connection, we highlight the imperative need to protect the right to engage in research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, as well as the right to transfer material, equipment and scientific information for such purposes, which are guaranteed by article IV of the Treaty.

The NPT is at a critical juncture. Given the threats to international peace and security resulting from the possession of nuclear weapons and the risk of the proliferation of those devices and other nuclear material, we cannot afford a string of failures in our efforts to address the issues that are preventing full implementation of the Treaty. We highlight the importance of the review cycle that will begin next year, and urge States parties to do their utmost to ensure a positive outcome of that exercise.

Our subregion was the first whose members formally acceded to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). That fact demonstrates our countries' historic commitment to improving the mechanisms and instruments for the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

The CTBT is an instrument of particular importance in the field of disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. As an integral aspect of the commitments that permitted the indefinite extension of the NTP in 1995, implementation of the CTBT would free the world of nuclear testing, thus contributing to the systematic and progressive reduction of nuclear weapons and helping to prevent and combat nuclear proliferation.

While we have made significant progress in ensuring the Treaty's entry into force, we cannot rest until that task is complete. We urge the countries listed in annex 2 of the Treaty — particularly the two nuclear-weapon States and those countries remaining outside the non-proliferation regime — to urgently take the measures necessary to join the rest of the international community in its efforts to permanently prohibit nuclear testing. In addition, we invite the Provisional Technical Secretariat to continue, with the support of interested countries, to seek solutions to the difficulties encountered by those countries that wish to ratify the Treaty but face technical constraints.

The member States of MERCOSUR and the associated States, while affirming their unwavering commitment to the objectives of the CTBT, express their firm support for maintaining the moratorium on nuclear testing until the Treaty can enter into force.

The countries of MERCOSUR and the associated countries are part of the first nuclear-weapon-free zone in an inhabited area of the world, established by the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean — the Treaty of Tlatelolco. February 2007 will mark the fortieth anniversary of its adoption.

Today, there are six inhabited nuclear-weapon-free zones in the world. We congratulate Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan on the signing in September this year of the Treaty establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia, the first in the Northern Hemisphere. With the Treaties of Tlatelolco, Rarotonga, Bangkok, Pelindaba and Antarctica, we are very close to ensuring that the entire Southern Hemisphere and adjacent areas will become a nuclear-weapon-free zone. We welcome and support the efforts of the States parties to those Treaties and of Mongolia to attain that objective. Furthermore, we call on all interested States to continue their efforts to assist the States that have not yet done so to accede to the protocols of the Treaties establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones. We are convinced that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones is a particularly relevant component of the efforts to achieve disarmament and non-proliferation. Therefore, the countries of MERCOSUR and the associated countries will remain firmly committed to the quest for a Southern Hemisphere and adjacent areas free from nuclear weapons.

**Mr. Khan** (Pakistan): We welcome the statement you made yesterday, Madam Chairperson, on the North Korean nuclear test.

Pakistan deplores the announcement by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea that it has conducted a nuclear test. That is a destabilizing development for the region. We had urged the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to desist from introducing nuclear weapons in the Korean peninsula. It is regrettable that it chose to ignore the advice of the international community not to test a nuclear-weapon device.

Pakistan has consistently supported the Six-Party Talks. We believe this mechanism should have been used to address North Korea's concerns. We hope that all the countries in the region will exercise restraint.

The sheer number of nuclear weapons — about 27,000 — their lethality and the lack of exact estimates about the existing stocks of fissile material pose the most serious threats to peace and security. Vertical proliferation, or improvement in nuclear weapon systems, has a demonstration effect and engenders new

uncertainties and instabilities. It also stimulates newer strategic competitions.

In the case of suspected or alleged non-compliance with the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), the best course is diplomacy, not war. Motivation to acquire weapons of mass destruction can be lowered by addressing the root causes. Intimidation, coercion or wars are not effective responses to such situations.

Under-Secretary-General Tanaka has rightly pointed out that the subtle, or not so subtle, blame game, or a litany of failures in the recent past, is not the answer. We should look at the existing and emerging threats and try to understand their correlation in an objective setting. The global security architecture is in flux. The consensus dating back to the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, and one that seemed to be developing in the post-cold-war period, is not holding well.

The prevalent divergent security interests have led to what we may call a strategic pause. Strategic pause is one thing; it is now turning into a strategic vacuum, which is dangerous for peace and stability, especially in regions of tension. The consensus underpinning disarmament and non-proliferation has eroded, and the multilateral disarmament machinery has atrophied. This opens the door for unilateral and discriminatory approaches.

We have proposed the convening of an international conference to develop a new consensus on disarmament and non-proliferation. The original bargain on complete disarmament, non-proliferation and facilitation of peaceful uses of nuclear energy through exchanges has to be revalidated.

Our quest for a new consensus should be guided by the principle of equal security for all States and sustained by multilateralism, not by some self-selected, even if well- meaning, groups of countries. Discrimination and asymmetric possession of weapons of mass destruction will not ensure non-proliferation or regional or global stability. Nor are technology constraints a durable answer, unless the motives for proliferation are addressed. A new security consensus should take into account the need to address existing and emerging global challenges to regional and international security.

We need to agree to revive the process of disarmament and non-proliferation, while evolving a universally agreed basis for the promotion of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy under globally agreed conditions. A fissile material treaty should be tied to the twin objectives of non-proliferation and disarmament. Prevention of the vertical and horizontal spread of nuclear-weapon technology will ensure non-proliferation; cuts into existing stocks will move disarmament forward.

A comprehensive and balanced programme of work on the four core issues — nuclear disarmament, a fissile material treaty, prevention of an arms race in outer space, and negative security assurances, as envisaged in The Five Ambassadors' Initiative, also known as the A5 Proposal — should not hamper, but, rather, facilitate our work. The A5 Proposal distilled all the proposals on the table. This is the minimum threshold we have. If we want to commence work, we can do so within these parameters, without preconditions.

To be credible and effective, a fissile material treaty must be verifiable, and it should take into account the existing stocks. A fissile material treaty without verification would amount to a unilateral moratorium, which we will not be able to accept.

Similarly, one can only presume that, over time, fissile material stocks will be transformed into nuclear weapons. A fissile material treaty, which freezes or accentuates asymmetries, will accelerate, not arrest, proliferation.

It is therefore important that a fissile material treaty provide a schedule for a progressive transfer of existing stockpiles to civilian use and place them under safeguards, so that the unsafeguarded stocks are equalized at the lowest possible level. In order to have full effect, it ought also to be accompanied by a mandatory programme for the elimination of asymmetries in the possession of fissile material stockpiles by various States.

Some delegations say that these issues are preconditions. We are of the view that insistence on dropping agreed bases for negotiations is a precondition. There are agreed principles that underlie the discourse on the fissile material treaty. The first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament called for a ban on fissile material as part of the intertwined objectives of nuclear disarmament

and non-proliferation. In 1993 the General Assembly upheld this principle, as did the NPT Review Conferences in 1995 and 2000. The objective has been to draft a fissile material treaty that will strengthen the security of all States, irrespective of their size and status.

The Shannon mandate of 1995 reflected consensus on two bases for a fissile material treaty: first, an agreement to begin negotiations on a universal, non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty to ban the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices; and, secondly, the open, non-limiting scope of negotiations captured in the affirmation that the mandate for the establishment of an ad hoc Committee does not preclude delegations from raising for consideration the issues of past and future production, as well as management of the fissile material. This is not a precondition, but a built-in latitude to raise any issue — cut-off, existing stocks, management and verifiability.

The so-called linkages between different issues are not extrinsic, but intrinsic, to the collectively agreed bargains. Two assumptions must be addressed in this context. The four core issues are of post-cold-war, twenty-first century, contemporary vintage. It is not correct to contend that the time is ripe for a fissile material treaty, but not for other issues. There is sufficient legal, technical and political basis for movement on all four issues. They will all qualify on grounds of contemporaneity and ripeness. Of course, when negotiations start, it is conceivable that each issue will be of varying pace and progress, but none of the items on the table can be removed from the Conference on Disarmament agenda at will.

In 1968, at the time of the adoption of the NPT, it was understood that non-nuclear-weapon States would seek legally binding negative security assurances. It is no coincidence that Security Council resolutions 255 (1968) and 984 (1995) were adopted to facilitate the NPT and its extension. The Conference on Disarmament, which has negative security assurances on its agenda, should start work early next year to draft a universal, multilateral treaty to assure non-nuclear States against the use or the threat of use of nuclear weapons. No issue is riper for negotiations than the negative security assurances. It has been on the front burner of the NPT regime since 1968 and on the Conference on Disarmament agenda since its inception. By elaborating and codifying unconditional negative security assurances, the Conference on Disarmament would help create a climate of confidence between nuclear- and non-nuclear- weapon States in the present tense international environment.

Some well-meaning representatives say that we should raise all these issues when the actual negotiations commence. Of course, we will do that. But one has to be sure what is sacrosanct and what is not. At one point, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) was considered to be the most important measure for disarmament and non-proliferation. It has become the victim of its principal sponsors.

The Shannon mandate was agreed, and now there are suggestions that it be shelved. Verification was a goal, and now non-verification is the objective for some delegations. If goal posts are constantly moved, it is difficult to define the goals of disarmament and non-proliferation.

Again, some equally well-meaning representatives have been suggesting majority principle as a working method in the Conference on Disarmament. Because of the long impasse, this may be quite tempting, but let me underline that, on issues related to collective security, consensus is a good device for decision-making. It also provides a sound basis for universal adherence and compliance. If we tinker with the principle of consensus in the Conference on Disarmament, we will have an interminable and unproductive discussion, even on this subject.

We should also give attention to reconciling nuclear reality within the global non-proliferation regime. Ways should be explored to normalize the relationship between the NPT and non-NPT nuclear-weapon States. For quite some time it has been suggested that the NPT could develop an additional protocol to resolve this issue.

Although Pakistan subscribes to the objectives of the NPT, it is a nuclear-weapon State. We are already fulfilling the NPT's non-proliferation norms. Pakistan is prepared to continue to act in consonance with the obligations undertaken by nuclear-weapon States under articles I, II and III of the NPT. But we cannot be expected to adhere to the Treaty as a non-nuclear-weapon State. We are observing a unilateral moratorium on further nuclear tests, but we cannot

agree to a moratorium on the production of fissile material, even as others are being aided in ways that will vastly expand their fissile material stocks.

It is being posited that, over time, nuclear power will supplement fossil fuels and gas globally. If that is the case, it is important that we evolve an agreed basis for the promotion of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, on a non-discriminatory basis and under appropriate international safeguards, in accordance with the international obligations of States.

Pakistan supports efforts to expand nuclear cooperation for civilian uses, while taking into account safety and security aspects and addressing the proliferation concerns. Pakistan has a legitimate requirement for nuclear power generation to meet the energy needs of our expanding economy. We will continue to develop nuclear power generation under strict IAEA safeguards.

The Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) is considering new demands for exceptionalism. We trust that the NSG will adopt a non-discriminatory, criteria-based approach that will, on the one hand, arrest horizontal or vertical proliferation, and on the other, offer equal opportunities for access to civilian nuclear technology under IAEA safeguards.

We are assessing the impact of recent developments on fissile material production in our region. This could impact our position on the fissile material treaty.

The international community and the NSG should also build firewalls that should prevent the spillover of nuclear technology, obtained for peaceful purposes, into military applications.

Under its overarching concept of "Strategic Restraint Regime", Pakistan has been pursuing with India a negotiated settlement of the issue of Jammu and Kashmir, nuclear and missile restraint and a balance in conventional forces. Pakistan does not want to enter into a strategic and conventional arms race, but we will do whatever is necessary to preserve the credibility of our minimum defensive deterrence level.

We have been holding consultations with our Indian counterparts on security concepts and doctrines to develop confidence-building measures in the areas of communication, risk reduction and strategic stability. The two sides have signed an agreement on pre-notification of flight-testing of ballistic missiles, and have operationalized a hotline link between the Foreign Secretaries of the two countries. We have also held discussions on a draft text of an agreement on reducing the risk from accidents relating to nuclear weapons.

**Mr. Trezza** (Italy): During the general debate several delegations referred to the so-called cooperative threat reduction initiative and its relevance as an arms control and disarmament instrument. In particular, the delegations of New Zealand and the United States informed the First Committee of the efforts made by their countries in this field. In its general statement, as well as in its statement today, which we fully share, the Presidency of the European Union mentioned this argument on behalf of the 39 countries that have subscribed to those statements. The delegation of Italy has already drawn attention to this initiative in other disarmament and non-proliferation forums, such as the Conference on Disarmament and the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) Review Conference, as well as in previous First Committee meetings.

In May 2005 the European Union presented to a plenary meeting of the NPT Review Conference a working paper entitled "European Union Common approach, Cooperative Threat Reduction — Global Partnership Initiative" (NPT/Conf.2005/WP37) which is on the record of that Conference. The cooperative threat reduction initiative has been the object of many international seminars, some organized by my country.

I wish to remind the Committee what the cooperative threat reduction initiative is about and why it is relevant to disarmament of weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear disarmament. The initiative, one of the most significant developments in the past few years in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation, involves a growing number of countries. It has been widely debated in the Group of Eight and the European Union, and has received great attention from disarmament scholars. It was originally developed in the early 1990s. It refers to the process of international cooperation and assistance, through which a large number of nuclear warheads and carriers have been destroyed or deactivated, and weapons of mass destruction materials have been eliminated or placed in safe storage.

The cooperative threat reduction initiative is particularly relevant to nuclear disarmament, which is

why I make this presentation under that cluster. But it also concerns other weapons of mass destruction: chemical, biological and radiological. The implementation of disarmament engagements has brought to the attention of the international community the fact that these engagements, be they multilateral, plurilateral or unilateral, are meaningless unless the weapons involved are either physically destroyed or appropriately disposed of. During past years the enormous technical and financial problems connected with the actual elimination of armaments, both conventional and non-conventional, have also come to the surface; the initiative is a multilateral effort aimed at addressing those problems.

The culminating moment of the initiative took place in Kananaskis, Canada, in June 2002, when the leaders of the G8 announced a Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction. Participants at the Summit pledged to raise up to $20 billion over the following 10 years to address these threats and, in particular, to "prevent terrorists, or those who harbour them, from acquiring or developing nuclear, chemical, radiological and biological weapons; missiles; and related materials, equipment and technology". In addition to these important financial pledges, the G8 leaders also agreed on a comprehensive set of non-proliferation principles, as well as on guidelines for implementation.

Since 2002 the Global Partnership has become a large-scale international initiative that has contributed to the enhancement of international security and stability. Fourteen States have now joined it. The initiative is open to further expansion to recipient countries, including those from the Community of Independent States, and donor countries that support the Kananaskis documents.

The G8 commitment to the Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction was reaffirmed at the 2006 G8 summit at St Petersburg. The cooperative threat reduction programme has become one of the important instruments of the European strategy against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. A total of €1.6 billion has been indicated as the European Union's total financial engagement.

The essence of our message is that we have not only to face the problem of negotiating and implementing disarmament and non-proliferation agreements, but also to cope with the additional problem of actually destroying the weapons concerned. In some cases this requires international cooperation, although the primary responsibility of countries for destruction and safety should remain unchanged.

**Mr. Macedo** (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): It is well known that there are some 30,000 nuclear weapons in the world, of which 25,000 are held by the United States and the Russian Federation. We must also take into account stockpiles of related material. No country in the world can feel safe given the mere existence of such stockpiles, which in themselves constitute a risk for their owners, in particular given the increased possibility that these arms or dangerous materials can fall into the hands of non-State actors.

What justifies these stockpiles when the Cold War is over? Against whom would they be used? Mexico has consistently reiterated its conviction that the security of States depends not on a nuclear deterrent, but, rather, on strengthening multilateral, regional and bilateral institutions and instruments that guarantee the stability we all seek.

We are concerned by the doctrines of the nuclear Powers and their threats to resort to their stockpiles. One recently declared that it might use these weapons to respond to a terrorist attack. Against whom would the attack be directed? How many innocent victims would there be? Would one particular State be held responsible? As indicated in the report of the Commission on Weapons of Mass Destruction, these weapons are true instruments of terror.

Once again, we emphasize the indissoluble link between nuclear disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. We cannot call for nuclear non-proliferation when the declared nuclear Powers not only have not reduced their nuclear stockpiles, but have even developed them further. No strategic doctrine can justify the ongoing development of such weapons.

Equally condemnable is the non-reduction of nuclear stockpiles, in conformity with international agreements. Vertical and horizontal proliferation is occurring, both overtly and covertly. Just as serious is the application of double standards or exception regimes of exception for States that have not acceded to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). This situation will certainly undermine the moral authority and credibility of the

international community, above all at a time like the present.

In this tense climate, the legitimate demands of the non-nuclear-weapon States take on greater importance, as they call for multilateral forums such as this to consolidate security guarantees through the negotiation of a treaty or protocol on the non-use or threat of use of nuclear weapons by the nuclear-weapon States.

The tenth anniversary of the opening for signature of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) coincides, sadly, with the announcement by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea that it has carried out a nuclear test. We share the legitimate concern of countries such as the Republic of Korea and Japan, and express our solidarity with them. Mexico condemns and deplores the carrying out of that nuclear test, confirmed by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which is contrary to the disarmament and non-proliferation regime. My Government has prepared a statement on this issue, which is available in the Committee.

As pioneers of nuclear-weapon-free zones, we call once again for the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula. Mexico is convinced that the total prohibition of nuclear tests will contribute substantially towards halting the proliferation of nuclear weapons and their further development. For that reason, we support the entry into force of the CTBT. To that end, from 11 to 13 October, Mexico will hold a seminar promoting ratification of the Treaty in the Caribbean region. The seminar, organized in conjunction with Canada, has the support of the Provisional Technical Secretariat of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Organization.

This year we also commemorate the tenth anniversary of the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons. In preparing for that commemoration, last November the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean adopted the Declaration of Santiago de Chile, which calls on the General Assembly to consider actions that States should undertake to fulfil their nuclear disarmament obligations under the NPT.

It is timely to recall that in its advisory opinion the International Court of Justice established the obligation of the States concerned not only to pursue negotiations on nuclear disarmament in good faith, but also to conclude those negotiations. A decade has passed, and the States on which that obligation rests, in refusing to honour their international commitments under article VI of the NPT, have created a situation that generates international responsibility.

What would have happened if the nuclear-weapon States had fulfilled their obligations? Let us imagine a world today in which the CTBT is in force, together with a treaty on the prohibition of the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons, and there are new procedures for bilateral and multilateral negotiation of measures to reduce the nuclear threat, such as lowering the operational status of nuclear weapons launching systems.

In all certainty, the international community would not be standing by helpless in the face of a new nuclear arms race, which places at risk the pact that we all agreed upon in 1968. In all certainty, we would not be so concerned about the possibility of non-State actors gaining access to nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. In all certainty, the whole body of disarmament treaties would not have been undermined by the calling into question of essential principles, such as verification. And certain States would not have needed to seek assurances in shameful agreements in an attempt to preserve, often in exchange for concessions, a flagging non-proliferation regime. I believe that we all agree that we would be living in a safer world.

Mexico is convinced that never before has there been such a critical need to provide education about disarmament and non-proliferation, as is highlighted in the United Nations study on this issue. Every two years, my country submits a draft resolution on this issue, whose text we are currently circulating.

We believe that action is urgently needed to foster a culture of nuclear disarmament, thereby helping to attain the common objective of freeing future generations from the inhuman and immoral scourge of nuclear weapons.

**The Chairperson**: I again remind all delegations that the deadline for the submission of draft resolutions is 6 p.m. tomorrow, 11 October. Delegations are urged to adhere to that deadline so that the secretariat may process the documents in a timely manner.

*The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.*

United Nations A/C.1/61/PV.10

# General Assembly

Sixty-first session

*Official Records*

First Committee

**10**th meeting

Tuesday, 10 October 2006, 3 p.m.

New York

*President:* Mrs. Juul ..... (Norway)

*The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.*

**Agenda items 82 to 97 (*continued*)**

**Thematic discussion on item subjects and introduction and consideration of all draft resolutions submitted under all disarmament and international security agenda items**

**The Chairman**: This afternoon, we shall continue our thematic discussion on the issue of nuclear weapons.

**Ms. Fernandez** (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): Cuba believes that the use of nuclear weapons is illegal and entirely immoral, and that it cannot be justified by any security concept or doctrine. Cuba continues firmly to support the total elimination of all weapons of mass destruction, nuclear weapons in particular. Like other members of the Non-Aligned Movement, Cuba has always made nuclear disarmament an absolute priority.

In spite of the end of the cold war, more than 27,000 nuclear weapons remain in the world, 12,000 of which are ready for immediate use. The use of those weapons would have devastating consequences for all known forms of life on Earth. Moreover, their use would represent a flagrant violation of international norms pertaining to the prevention of genocide. Moreover, new and more sophisticated nuclear weapons continue to be developed, posing a serious threat to all of humanity. The existence of strategic defence doctrines that depend increasingly on the possession and use of such weapons also represents a danger to international peace and security.

The belief that security can be guaranteed only by possessing nuclear weapons is totally false. To achieve State security by threatening mass destruction is to corrupt the principles underlying the most basic norms of human coexistence. The continued possession of nuclear weapons serves as an irresponsible incentive for proliferation, which increases the nuclear danger throughout the world.

The lack of progress in fulfilling the unequivocal commitment to total elimination of nuclear weapons undertaken by the nuclear Powers at the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is unacceptable. The commitments already made — including the 13 practical steps agreed at the Sixth NPT Review Conference, held in 2000 — must be fully honoured.

At the Seventh NPT Review Conference, it became obvious that some nuclear Powers still lack the political will needed to attain the objective of eliminating and prohibiting nuclear weapons once and for all. I must reiterate that for Cuba, the NPT is not an end in itself, but a step on the road towards nuclear disarmament.

Once again, Cuba firmly expresses its rejection of the selective application of the NPT and the use of a double standard in that regard. Likewise, we stress that the issues related to nuclear disarmament and the

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peaceful use of nuclear energy cannot continue to be set aside to focus on horizontal non-proliferation.

We cannot continue to postpone the launching of multilateral negotiations to conclude a universal, unconditional and legally binding instrument, whereby the nuclear-weapon States would promise not to use or threaten to use such weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States.

Nuclear weapons and their technical infrastructure are extremely expensive. The nuclear weapons industry involves a useless diversion of resources that could be used in valuable programmes such as development assistance. The implementation of such programmes would enable us to make genuine contributions to international peace and security.

Once again, Cuba recalls that the Charter of the United Nations envisages the establishment and maintenance of international peace and security with the least possible diversion of the world's human and economic resources towards armaments. Cuba highlights the imperative need to launch multilateral negotiations aimed at the swift conclusion of a convention prohibiting the development, production, deployment, stockpiling, transfer, threat and use of nuclear weapons and providing for their elimination.

We reaffirm our total commitment to a world free from nuclear weapons and our resolve to fight to make that aspiration a reality for all of humanity.

**Ms. Fedorovich** (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): The position of Belarus on the issue of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation was clearly expressed in the statement made by my delegation during the general debate. We believe that the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) must be strengthened and that it must remain the basis for international security.

While the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) is undoubtedly important, today I should like to discuss the signing of the Treaty on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia. I wish to draw the Committee's attention to the statement made by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Belarus in his capacity as Chairman of the Council of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the States members of the Collective Security Treaty Organization, the full text of which was circulated as a document of the Security Council (S/2006/766, annex). The statement points out that the signing of the Treaty on the establishment of a nuclear weapon-free zone in Central Asia is a significant contribution to ensuring global and regional security and nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. That is particularly relevant in the context of the global campaign to fight terrorism and to prevent the acquisition of weapons of mass destruction by terrorists. The signing of the Treaty will certainly also help to strengthen the NPT and provide impetus for United Nations efforts to address all issues related to nuclear non-proliferation.

**Mr. Adji** (Indonesia): Allow me to reiterate the point that was highlighted by my delegation in its statement during the general debate of the Committee last week: we believe in the need to abolish all nuclear weapons and will work to that end with the international community. We believe that nuclear weapons are dangerous in anyone's hands, including those of nuclear-weapon States. In addressing the issue of nuclear weapons, we should never lose sight of the catastrophic danger associated with such weapons, which could result from accidents or miscalculations.

We therefore support the call of the Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission and share the belief that existing stocks of such weapons should be outlawed and eliminated in a systematic and progressive manner. Rhetoric alone will not suffice to address this issue. The nuclear-weapon States have a moral obligation to move away from nuclear weapons. That should start with the States holding the largest arsenals of nuclear weapons, namely, the United States and Russia. Their strong commitment and leadership are important, and they should demonstrate such commitment and leadership by setting an example.

We look forward to the commencement of a new cycle in the review process of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) next year. In the preparation for the 2010 Review Conference and in response to the impasse that has prevailed since the last Review Conference, there is an urgent need to strengthen the integrity of the NPT.

In our common efforts to pursue the objectives of disarmament and non-proliferation, the States parties need to demonstrate the maximum flexibility and sufficient political will to bridge the gap and create common ground for reaching consensus and agreement on both procedural and substantive issues. Secondly,

States parties need to respect the existing obligations and commitments under the NPT and the agreements reached at previous Review Conferences, rather than intensifying measures using mechanisms outside the NPT regime.

Having said that, I now wish to comment on the recent nuclear test conducted by the People's Democratic Republic of Korea. We reiterate our position that it was unacceptable and cannot be justified.

The nuclear test conducted by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will only create new tension and threaten stability in the Asia-Pacific region. The test could also trigger nuclear proliferation in the region and impede efforts by the international community to undertake comprehensive nuclear disarmament in accordance with the NPT.

We are of the view that no country's security and survival warrant the possession and development of nuclear weapons. We are also deeply concerned about the prospect of nuclear proliferation in Asia — which stretches from West Asia to East Asia — particularly when the problems related to proliferation issues have eased in other regions.

We strongly urge the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to refrain from developing nuclear weapons in the aftermath of its recent test. We also urge all parties concerned to resume the Six-Party Talks in order to seek a peaceful resolution of the North Korean nuclear issue.

**Mr. Prasad** (India). Before making my statement in today's thematic debate, I would like to share with First Committee delegations that India has expressed its deep concern at the reported nuclear test conducted by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in violation of its international commitments, thereby jeopardizing peace, security and stability on the Korean peninsula and in the region. The test also highlights the dangers of clandestine proliferation.

The Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (resolution S-10/2) constitutes the basic terms of reference of any discussion on nuclear disarmament. The special session unanimously accorded the highest priority to the goal of nuclear disarmament. It outlined concrete steps to achieve that objective. It affirmed that the ultimate goal was the complete elimination of nuclear weapons.

Some six years ago, the unanimously adopted United Nations Millennium Declaration (resolution 55/2) reiterated the commitment of the States Members of the United Nations to strive for the elimination of all weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons, and to keep all options open for achieving that aim.

The objective factors for the increasing militarization of international relations, a feature of the cold war years, no longer exist. Yet, we are quite far from realizing the goal of the elimination of nuclear weapons.

A basic problem besetting the multilateral disarmament institutions and processes is the lack of trust among States. This further begets a lack of willingness for mutual accommodation, making progress on nuclear disarmament even more difficult. This lack of trust also thwarted consensus on disarmament and non-proliferation issues at the 2005 World Summit. For any breakthrough to occur, all States will need to engage sincerely in exchanges on their approaches to nuclear disarmament and understand and accommodate each other's threat perceptions and security concerns.

Trust can be restored only through a reaffirmation of the unequivocal commitment of all nuclear-weapon States to the goal of the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. A revalidation of this commitment will be a further step towards its progressive concretization. That is the right way to proceed towards systematic and progressive nuclear disarmament. The process will also be facilitated by reducing the salience of nuclear weapons in the security doctrines of nuclear-weapon States, and also by the alignment of nuclear doctrines to a posture of no first use and non-use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States.

While India will continue to maintain a credible minimum deterrent, there is no dilution in India's commitment to nuclear disarmament. India's responsible doctrine is based on no first use and non-use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States. Our doctrine also reaffirms India's readiness to join multilateral negotiations for the reduction and elimination of nuclear weapons. India has continued to observe a moratorium on nuclear explosive tests. We

are ready to participate in negotiations in the Conference of Disarmament on a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the proliferation of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.

Any solution to end the impasse in the Conference on Disarmament on its programme of work must respond to the concerns of the constituents of the Conference, whether small or big, developing or developed, non-nuclear or nuclear-weapon States, within or outside alliances and other privileged security relationships.

Our considered proposals to build a consensus that strengthens the ability of the international community to initiate concrete steps towards achieving the goal of nuclear disarmament have been outlined in the working paper that we submitted in the course of the general debate last week. In order to save time, I am not now going to list its recommendations. The document should be made available by the Secretariat very shortly.

We live in a time of challenge; about that, there is no doubt. This challenge can be met only from a collective commitment to global, verifiable and non-discriminatory nuclear disarmament and by devising a road map towards a nuclear-weapon-free world.

**Mr. Luaces** (United States of America): On 9 October, North Korea announced that it had tested a nuclear weapon. While our Government is still working to confirm the technical details of the explosion, North Korea's action is an urgent threat to peace, stability and security in the region and is a matter of grave concern to the entire international community.

The implications of this action by North Korea for international efforts to combat proliferation, international terrorism and the spread of weapons of mass destruction could not be more profound or troubling. The test clearly demonstrates North Korea's continued reckless disregard for peace and security. The United States is consulting urgently with our partners, and within the Security Council, regarding appropriate responses to this grave provocation by North Korea.

Its continuing development of long-range missiles and nuclear weapons, as well as its increasing provocations, necessitate swift and stern measures by the international community. The North Korean regime remains one of the world's leading proliferators of missile technology, including to Iran and Syria. The transfer of nuclear weapons or nuclear material by North Korea to States or non-State entities would be considered a grave threat to the United States, and we would hold North Korea fully accountable for the consequences of such action.

The United States remains committed to diplomacy, and we shall continue to protect ourselves and our interests. President Bush has reaffirmed to our allies in the region that the United States will meet the full range of our deterrent and security commitments. It is critical that the international community work together to address North Korea's growing threats to its neighbours and to the world.

North Korea must be made to understand, in no uncertain terms, that we are serious in our resolve to deal with its dangerous and destabilizing behaviour. The international community must send a clear signal to North Korea that, if it chooses to continue its programmes of weapons of mass destruction and to develop their delivery vehicles, its reckless behaviour will only increase further its political and economic isolation. The leadership of North Korea must know that its misbehaviour only undermines its security and the welfare of the already suffering North Korean people.

The United States urges the international community to immediately, unequivocally and publicly denounce the North Korean action. Accordingly, we call on all Governments to take concrete defensive measures against North Korean and all other proliferation, including financial measures to freeze assets and transactions involving North Korean proliferation activities.

**Mr. Landman** (Netherlands): This week indeed has shown again that nuclear weapons in irresponsible hands are the single greatest threat to humanity. Conducting a nuclear test in present-day circumstances was a tremendous and deliberate provocation that has rightly been condemned by all sides. There is no justification for it, but we could ask ourselves what lesson should be drawn from this development. Any analysis could start with the words of last year's report to the Secretary-General by the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change. It stated:

> "Many people believe that what passes for collective security today is simply a system for protecting the rich and powerful. Such perceptions pose a fundamental challenge to building collective security today. Stated baldly, without mutual recognition of threats there can be no collective security. Self-help will rule, mistrust will predominate and cooperation for long-term mutual gain will elude us." (*A/59/565, p. 16*)

A few days ago, we saw one of the worst examples of such self-help, and it is not unique. Analysts now point to what is sometimes called the danger of a cascade of proliferation. The United Nations report from which I have just quoted stresses that perceptions matter. Secretary-General Kofi Annan himself elaborated on this important issue in his report entitled, "In Larger Freedom", stating:

> "Depending on wealth, geography and power, we perceive different threats as the most pressing. But the truth is we cannot afford to choose. Collective security today depends on accepting that the threats which each region of the world perceives as most urgent are in fact equally so for all." (*A/59/2005, para. 79*)

Irresponsible behaviour cannot be eliminated from the world, but we must do out utmost to minimize it, in particular when weapons of mass destruction are involved. What actions can we take?

First, it is of vital importance to uphold the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). If its balanced commitments start to unravel, the level of global security will plummet. All elements of the NPT bargain are equally crucial. Proliferation in any form is unacceptable. Cooperation on the peaceful transfer of technology remains a confidence-building measure as well as an obligation, and nuclear-weapon States have to disarm. As Canadian Senator Douglas Roche of the Middle Powers Initiative has said, nuclear deterrence as a permanent policy is not morally acceptable.

Secondly, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) must enter into force. We need renewed vigour to that end, as it offers an essential safeguard against proliferation. The Netherlands will continue to support actively the Special Representative to promote the ratification process of the CTBT, Ambassador Jaap Ramaker.

Thirdly, a breakthrough in the Conference on Disarmament is now imperative. We must acknowledge that the numerous issues on its agenda require further prioritization, recognizing their relative weight as confirmed in the focused, structured debates held this year in the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva.

**Mr. Duarte** (Brazil): Madam Chairperson, the Brazilian Government has vehemently condemned the nuclear test announced by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. That decision goes against the presidential declaration of the Security Council on the issue adopted on 6 October.

We call on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to return without any conditions and as a non-nuclear-weapon State to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). We also call on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to become a party, at an early date, to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and to observe the test moratorium pending the entry into force of that Treaty. We also call on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to return in good faith to the six-party talks, with a view to reaching a solution to the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula and an understanding that takes into account the international security concerns of countries in the region.

Brazil associates itself once again with the efforts of the international community in favour of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and reiterates its view that significant and urgent steps should be taken with a view to the elimination of all atomic arsenals.

**The Chairperson**: There are no other delegations on the list for the general debate at this stage. Does any delegation wish to take the floor?

If not, the Committee will now proceed with the next segment of the meeting, during which delegations introduce draft resolutions.

**Ms. Fernando** (Sri Lanka): Madam Chairperson, I simply wanted to ask if you could confirm that the draft resolutions being introduced just now have been issued by the Secretariat as "L" documents. If not, when will they be available? I would not want to hold up the Committee's work, but traditionally we have had the documents before us as they are being introduced. Perhaps, in this new scenario, the Secretariat could let us know in advance which resolutions are being introduced, so that if the

documents have not yet been issued we could at least have some texts before us.

**Mr. Sareva** (Secretary of the Committee): As representatives know, the working methods of this Committee are well established. Traditionally — and this will be the case this year as well — the Committee moves to the thematic discussion and introduction of draft resolutions by Member States even if not all "L." documents have been issued.

The Committee last year adopted its programme of work and timetable for the current session. That timetable clearly indicates that the deadline for submitting all drafts is Wednesday, 11 October. The Secretariat has been pleased this year to receive a number of drafts from delegations well before the deadline, a fact that the Chairperson commended yesterday in her remarks to the Committee. On behalf of the Secretariat, I wish to express my gratitude to all delegations that have already submitted draft resolutions or decisions and to all those that are expected to follow suit.

The programme of work and timetable as it stands poses a practical problem, an issue, I understand, that was referred to by the representative of Sri Lanka. As we have done in years past, we begin the thematic debate and the introduction of draft resolutions even before the deadline for submitting the drafts. Under those circumstances, the Secretariat is in the hands of Member States. There is no guarantee that we will have issued limited distribution documents in all official languages at the start of the thematic debate. That is a factor in the programme of work as it now stands.

It is also the right of Member States to proceed in line with the standard practice of the Committee and the programme of work as adopted, and to introduce draft resolutions during the thematic debate. The thematic subjects, or clusters as we call them, are tools that are intended to make the Committee's work easier and more predictable. It is, of course, the right of any delegation to introduce any draft at any time during the thematic part of our work during this week and the next. We are grateful to Member States who introduce their drafts under the relevant thematic subject, as that facilitates a more interactive discussion.

In short, the answer to the question posed by the representative of Sri Lanka is that we probably do not yet have all the limited distribution — L documents — as the deadline for submission is tomorrow. To date six of these documents have been issued. That puts u ahead of last year and many years before that. We thu far have issued L.1 through L.6, the last of whic having been requested for today. Draft resolutio A/C.1/61/L.7, on the observance of environmenta norms in the drafting and implementation o agreements on disarmament and arms control, has als been requested for today and should, I hope, be issue by the end of the day.

In addition, we should have four L documents available tomorrow. These deal with the relationship between disarmament and development; United Nations Regional Centres for Peace and Disarmament the prevention of an arms race in outer space; and the report of the Disarmament Commission. Four additional L documents should be available the day after tomorrow. Provided that we will continue to enjoy the cooperation of delegations and that all drafts will be submitted by 6 p.m. tomorrow, the Committee should have all L documents available, after translation and processing, no later than Wednesday, 18 October.

As to whether we can ascertain in advance which draft resolutions or decisions will be introduced on any given day, we are approached by Member States, as we have requested, which do indicate that they plan to introduce certain drafts and we are grateful to them when they do so. Having said that, it is also the right of Member States to ask for the floor and to introduce additional drafts, without having alerted the Secretariat in advance. That is all I wanted to say at this time; I would be happy to answer any questions.

**Ms. Fernando** (Sri Lanka): I wanted to ask the Committee Secretary if he knows whether any draft resolutions will be introduced today. Perhaps with some cooperation between delegations and the Secretariat, we will all be able to work in a cooperative manner. I understand that the Committee Secretary has no control over that matter, but if he could inform us about the drafts that are being introduced, it would make the work from the delegations' side more practical and easy.

**Mr. Sareva** (Secretary of the Committee): We were informed this morning that two Member States wanted to speak for the purpose of introducing draft resolutions. Those delegations will shortly be given the floor. Malaysia will introduce a draft under agenda item 90 (u), "Follow-up to the advisory opinion of the

International Court of Justice on the *Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons*". Thereafter, the Chair will give the floor to the representative of Brazil to introduce two draft resolutions. One, under agenda item 90 (h), is entitled "Nuclear-weapon-free southern hemisphere and adjacent areas", the second, also under agenda item 90, concerns the 2010 Review Conference of the parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

We were also approached in the course of this afternoon's meeting by the representative of India, who intends to introduce draft resolutions, entitled "Convention on the Prohibition of the Use of Nuclear Weapons" and "Reducing nuclear danger". Finally, Australia has indicated that it will introduce a draft resolution pertaining to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

I hope I have answered all questions correctly and faithfully. There may, as I mentioned, be further introductions to come. I was happy to note that the representative of Sri Lanka also acknowledged the fact that we have no control over Member States in this respect. We very much appreciate the cooperation of delegations on this and other issues.

**The Chairperson**: I call on the representative of Malaysia to introduce a draft resolution.

**Mr. Hamidon** (Malaysia): My delegation has the honour to introduce to the Committee, as it has done in past sessions, a draft resolution entitled "Follow-up to the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the *Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons*".

My delegation expresses its appreciation to the Secretary-General for his report, contained in document A/61/127, submitted under agenda item 90 (u) of the sixty-first session of the General Assembly.

My delegation expresses its appreciation to member States that have submitted information pursuant to resolution 60/76.

The advisory opinion on the legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons rendered by the International Court of Justice on 8 July 1996 remains a historic and resolute decision in the field of nuclear disarmament. The decision of the Court constitutes and remains an authoritative legal call to rid the world of nuclear weapons. The Court's unanimous conclusion that there exists an obligation to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective control is reflected in operative paragraph 1 of the draft resolution.

The unanimous decision of the International Court of Justice, while consistent with the solemn obligation of States parties under article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, does not confine itself only to those States parties, but is, rather significantly, a universal declaration.

Operative paragraph 2 of the text underlines the obligation of all States to conduct and successfully conclude negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament. The decisions of the International Court of Justice must be followed up by concrete action by all Member States.

Aside from retaining those important pronouncements, the text has a necessary modification for technical updating.

The global disarmament and non-proliferation framework remains in flux. Nuclear-weapon States continue to modernize existing nuclear weapons, and large stockpiles of nuclear weapons remain in their arsenals. Several nuclear-weapon States have chosen disengagement, retrogression and unilateral measures rather than multilateralism and multilaterally agreed solutions.

Those are some of the several fundamental challenges which, if left unchecked, could destabilize international peace and security and increase the risk of new instances of unilateral or pre-emptive use of force. The Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, which underscores the primacy of nuclear disarmament, remains valid today. Member States agreed at that session that nuclear weapons pose the greatest danger to humankind and to the survival of human civilization.

The goal of nuclear disarmament remains elusive. We must remain committed to achieving that goal. We cannot allow the indefinite perpetuation of the possession of such weapons, nor can we allow the possessive obsession with such weapons to further undermine our goal.

In that connection, my delegation calls on all Member States to commence negotiations leading to complete nuclear disarmament and the unequivocal

undertaking by the nuclear-weapon States to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear weapons. The forthcoming fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament will provide us with an opportunity to renew, revitalize and create a new milieu for the further advancement of the global nuclear disarmament process.

The challenges facing the international community in trying to realize a nuclear-weapon-free world have become more formidable than ever, requiring our full and unqualified commitment to the goals we have set ourselves. Recent events are clear testimony to current realities.

My delegation is confident that the draft resolution will continue to receive the support of a large majority of Member States. Furthermore, my delegation is confident that States that support multilateral negotiations will heed the views of the overwhelming majority inside and outside this Committee and the General Assembly, and will join us towards achieving the global elimination of nuclear weapons.

Having presented the draft resolution, let me now convey my Government's response to the nuclear test conducted by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which reads as follows:

> "Malaysia deplores the nuclear test which the Democratic People's Republic of Korea claims to have conducted on 9 October 2006. Malaysia believes that the test is a serious setback to efforts aimed at keeping the region and the world free of nuclear weapons. It could also trigger an arms race in the region. Therefore, Malaysia calls on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to cease developing its capability to produce nuclear weapons and to return to the moratorium on nuclear testing.
>
> "Malaysia strongly believes that the continued existence of nuclear weapons presents a grave threat to humanity, particularly by increasing the risk of proliferation. Malaysia therefore reiterates the importance of achieving the universal goal of complete and general disarmament.
>
> "Malaysia urges all countries in the region to exercise maximum restraint and refrain from actions that could further heighten tension in the region. In that context, Malaysia further urg parties concerned to return to the Six-Party and resume negotiations with a view to res all outstanding issues amicably."

Nuclear disarmament must remain a high p on the global agenda. We must address the issu challenges confronting nuclear disarmament comprehensive, constructive and balanced mann must seek the consensus and political will to forward. Member States must support multi efforts that seek to bring all countries togethe multilateral effort to create a nuclear-free worl vitality of multilateralism and multilaterally solutions in addressing disarmament and interna security issues must be preserved and strengthene

**Mr. Duarte** (Brazil): Brazil held the pres of the seventh Review Conference of the Parties Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear We (NPT) in 2005, and because of that Brazil is exp following past practice, to present to the G Assembly at its sixty-first session a draft reso calling for the convening of the preparatory proc the 2010 review conference of the parties to the N

Having myself presided over the 2005 Review Conference, it is therefore an honour for formally introduce here the draft resolution e "2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons Preparatory Committee", under agenda item "General and complete disarmament".

Informal consultations on the draft reso were held in July and September in New Yor those occasions, delegations exchanged view issues related to the convening of the first Prepa Committee, and in particular the question of the The draft resolution will be submitted by 6 tomorrow, and a copy of the draft resolution ha sent by fax by the mission of Brazil to all missi New York. I trust that the issue of the venue of th Preparatory Committee for the conference w solved in the very near future.

The draft text is essentially of a proc nature. Its importance is earned by the role it pl starting the review process of the Treaty for the review conference. I am sure that this goal w achieved by means of the adoption of the draft the support of all States parties to the Treaty.

**Mr. Paranhos** (Brazil): It is an honour for me to formally introduce the draft resolution entitled "Nuclear-weapon-free southern hemisphere and adjacent areas", under agenda item 90, "General and complete disarmament".

This is the eleventh consecutive year that a draft resolution on this important matter has been put before the First Committee. Once again, as was the case last year, Brazil is honoured to be joined by New Zealand as initiators of this draft resolution. Adopted as resolution 60/58, this initiative gathered 167 votes in favour at the previous General Assembly session, sustaining the overwhelming majority of votes that has characterized the adoption of such resolutions since 1996. We hope that the present text will enjoy the same broad support. A copy of the draft resolution has been sent by fax to each permanent mission in New York.

This year's draft resolution includes changes relating to the signature of the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia, which was signed in Kazakhstan on 8 September 2006. We also included reference to the adoption of the Declaration of Santiago de Chile by the Governments of the States members of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean and the States parties to the Treaty of Tlatelolco, during the nineteenth regular session of the General Conference of the Agency, held in Santiago on 7 and 8 November 2005.

One significant development of the past decade is that in several parts of the world the nuclear option has been ruled out. Nuclear-weapon-free zones have been formally established in Latin America under the Treaty of Tlatelolco and subsequently in the South Pacific with the Treaty of Rarotonga, in South-East Asia with the Treaty of Bangkok and in Africa under the Treaty of Pelindaba. The areas of application of these treaties, with the addition of the Antarctic Treaty, contribute to free from nuclear weapons all peoples of the southern hemisphere as well as of the adjacent areas north of the Equator where those treaties apply.

Our initiative aims at achieving recognition by the General Assembly for the eleventh consecutive year of the progressive emergence of a nuclear-weapon-free southern hemisphere and adjacent areas. Such recognition should be considered as a confirmation of the commitment of the international community to non-proliferation and disarmament.

We want to reiterate that, as in previous years, our draft resolution does not create new legal obligations. Neither does it contradict any norm of international law applicable to navigation, such as those contained in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

We call upon States that have not yet done so to move towards ratification of the nuclear-weapon-free zone treaties and their protocols. We wish to put on record our appreciation to all those who voted in favour of resolution 60/58 last year. We expect to continue to deserve their support.

**Ms. Millar** (Australia): As I mentioned this morning, Australia led international action to bring the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) to the General Assembly, where it was adopted by an overwhelming majority of States in 1996 (see resolution 50/245), so it now gives me great pleasure to introduce the draft resolution on the CTBT to the First Committee at the tenth anniversary of the Treaty's opening for signature.

The text this time is in many ways a technical update on those of previous years, but I would draw the of delegations attention to an important new operative paragraph 5, which condemns the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's announcement of a nuclear weapons test on 9 October 2006.

The draft resolution will be formally issued as document A/C.1/61/L.48 tomorrow, but we have copies at the back of this room for any delegation that would like to look at it now. We would invite those delegations that wish to sponsor the text to please contact the Australian delegation.

While I have the floor, I also want to introduce another draft resolution, on implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and Their Destruction, in Australia's capacity as President of the seventh Meeting of the States Parties to the Mine Ban Treaty, which was held recently in Geneva. Again, this is a technical update of previous resolutions. Copies are available at the back of this room, and it will be issued as document A/C.1/61/L.47 tomorrow.

**Mr. Prasad** (India): I am taking the floor to introduce two draft resolutions submitted by India under the cluster on nuclear disarmament. We thought it appropriate to introduce the draft resolutions in

conjunction the thematic debate on the subject. Both of these proposals constitute integral elements of the working paper on nuclear disarmament presented by my delegation during the course of the general debate at the end of last week. While the Secretariat receives the draft resolutions and prints them as documents A/C.1/61/L.51 and L.49 respectively, we have transmitted the two texts to the New York missions of all Member States.

First, on behalf of its sponsors, I would like to introduce the draft resolution entitled "Convention on the Prohibition of the Use of Nuclear Weapons". The draft resolution underlines that the use of nuclear weapons poses the most serious threat to the survival of mankind. At the Non-Aligned Movement Summit held in Havana last month, participating heads of State or Government stressed their concern at the threat to humanity posed by the continued existence of nuclear weapons and their possible use or threat of use. The draft resolution reflects the belief of the sponsors that a multilateral, universal and legally binding instrument prohibiting the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons would contribute to the mitigation of the nuclear threat as an important interim measure until we reach agreement on a step-by-step process for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. This will serve to diminish the salience of nuclear weapons in maintaining international security and contribute to changes in doctrines, policies, attitudes and institutions, which are required for a nuclear-weapon-free world. Moreover, a multilateral agreement prohibiting the use of nuclear weapons would strengthen international security and create the right climate for negotiations leading to the elimination of nuclear weapons.

The operative part of the draft resolution reiterates the call to the Conference on Disarmament to commence negotiations to reach agreement on an international convention prohibiting the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons under any circumstances. A positive vote for this draft resolution will be a vote by the international community in favour of a decisive step towards the elimination of nuclear weapons.

I also have the honour to introduce the draft resolution on reducing nuclear danger. All constituents of the United Nations unanimously agreed in 1978 that nuclear weapons posed the greatest danger to mankind. Member States also agreed that effective measures of nuclear disarmament and prevention of nuclear war have the highest priority. Meanwhile, measures for reducing nuclear danger are necessary for safeguarding our collective security interest.

The draft resolution offers modest and pragmatic proposals for the safety and security of mankind pending the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. First, it calls for a review of nuclear doctrines and for immediate steps to reduce the risk of unintentional or accidental use of nuclear weapons.

The Final Document of the first special session on disarmament (resolution S-10/2) recommended that, to ensure that mankind's survival was not endangered, all States, in particular nuclear-weapon States, should consider various proposals designed to secure the avoidance of the use of nuclear weapons and the prevention of nuclear war. Strategic experts have identified one or other of the measures proposed in this draft resolution as feasible in the present circumstances, including through de-alerting and de-targeting of nuclear weapons.

The draft resolution manifests the conviction of the sponsors that the hair-trigger posture of nuclear forces carries the unacceptable risk of unintentional or accidental use of these weapons, which could have catastrophic consequences. The threat posed by the increased risk of nuclear weapons or their components falling into the hands of non-State actors, including terrorists, has further aggravated existing dangers.

While unilateral, bilateral or plurilateral nuclear confidence-building measures are useful, our aim is to reach international understanding or agreements for reducing nuclear danger, and also the risk of accidental nuclear war. A positive vote for this draft resolution will be a reaffirmation by the international community of the need to take decisive steps towards reducing nuclear danger.

**The Chairperson**: One delegation has asked to speak in exercise of the right of reply. May I remind members that the number of interventions in exercise of the right of reply for any delegation at a given meeting shall be limited to two per item. The first intervention in exercise of the right of reply for any delegation on any item at a given meeting shall be limited to 10 minutes, and the second intervention shall be limited to five minutes.

I now give the floor to the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

**Mr. Kim Kwang Il** (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): The Democratic People's Republic of Korea rejects categorically the fuss that some countries, including the United States and Japan, have made about our nuclear test and have urged us to abandon the nuclear programme.

In this regard, my delegation wishes to reiterate parts of the statement about the nuclear test issued by the Foreign Ministry of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, so that delegations in this Committee will have a better understanding of the issue.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea officially announced that it had manufactured up-to-date nuclear weapons after going through transparent, legitimate processes to cope with the escalated United States threat of nuclear war and sanctions and pressure.

The already declared possession of nuclear weapons presupposes the nuclear test. The extreme United States threat of a nuclear war and sanctions and pressure compelled the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to conduct a nuclear test, an essential process for bolstering nuclear deterrence as a corresponding measure for defence.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea will never use nuclear weapons first, but strictly prohibits any threat of nuclear weapons and nuclear transfer. A people without a reliable war deterrent are bound to meet a tragic death, and the sovereignty of their country is bound to be wantonly infringed upon. This is a bitter lesson taught by the bloodshed resulting from the law of the jungle in different parts of the world.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea's nuclear weapons will serve as a reliable war deterrent for protecting the supreme interests of the State and the security of the Korean nation from the United States threat of aggression, averting a new war and firmly safeguarding peace and stability on the Korean peninsula under all circumstances.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea will always sincerely implement its international commitment in the field of nuclear non-proliferation as a responsible nuclear-weapon State. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea will do its utmost to realize the denuclearization of the peninsula and to give impetus to worldwide nuclear disarmament and the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons.

As the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has been exposed to the United States nuclear threat and blackmail over the past more than half a century, it proposed the denuclearization of the peninsula before any others, and has since, has made utmost efforts to that end. The United States, however, has abused the idea of denuclearization set out by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for isolating and stifling the ideology and the system chosen by its people, while systematically disregarding all of its magnanimity and sincerity.

The ultimate goal of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is not denuclearization to be followed by its unilateral disarmament, but the goal of settling the hostile relations between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States and removing the very source of all nuclear threats from the Korean peninsula and its vicinity.

There is no change in the principled stand of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to materialize the denuclearization of the peninsula through dialogue and negotiation. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea will make positive efforts to denuclearize the peninsula in its own way, without fail, despite all challenges and difficulties.

**The Chairperson**: Before adjourning the meeting, allow me once again to remind all delegations that the deadline for submission of draft resolutions is tomorrow, 11 October, at 6 p.m. Delegations are urged to adhere to that deadline so that the Secretariat can process the documents in a timely manner.

Tomorrow, at 3 p.m. sharp, the Committee will be having a thematic discussion on the issues of other weapons of mass destruction and of the disarmament aspects of outer space. We will also have a guest speaker, the President-designate of the Biological Weapons Convention Review Conference.

*The meeting rose at 4.20 p.m.*